FRIEDENS CHURCH.

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AT THE

LITTLE SCHUYLKILL.

A HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATION
AND COMMUNITY.

BY

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PREFACE.

To the memory of the departed pastors and fathers of the Church by the Little Schuylkill, this little work is dedicated.

It has been prepared with a view to stimulate the congregation by a study of its past history in comparison with the present, and to redeem what is worthy of interest from the grasp of oblivion.

The occasion of its production is the One Hundredth Anniversary of the dedication of the first church edifice at Friedens Church.

In its preparation our greatest embarrassment, next to the dearth of good records or any records at all, was the shortness of time allowed us from its inception to the actual occasion itself, to gather data, verify traditions, and more thoughtfully to write out its chapters. Errors in the work will, therefore, no doubt appear, which we shall heartily regret. Though asked to undertake this work some time in the latter part of June, we found practically no time to systematically map out and begin the work of research until the middle of August. We chased many an *ignis fatuus* of tradition over miles and days only to find it a myth; so that, with the absolutely necessary work of our parish, we found ourselves in the middle of September before we could put pen to paper to recount the facts accumulated into some semblance of order.

For some years we have had in mind to write a history of the first church built in these trans-Kittatiny wilds, (Zion's, or Red Church in West Brunswick, 1755,) and our former researches for this work gave us clues, at least, from which to more readily trace back the early history in the community of East Brunswick, to reliable sources.

In addition to the use we have made of Wilder's "History of Schuylkill County," Rev. E. T. Kretchman's "Old Trappe Church," Dr. Theodore E. Schmauk's "Old Salem in Lebanon," Dr. Benjamin Rush's "Manners and Customs of the Germans in Pennsylvania," 1798, and Capt. D. C. Henning's "Tales of the Blue Mountains," we owe special acknowledgment to Francis

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Moyer, Esq., Paul Bock, and the Misses Katie O. Bolich and Clara C. Bock for valuable aid in gathering data ; also to Charles S. Koch, Esq., of Philadelphia, a descendant of Balzer Bock, for valuable information. Our thanks are due also to many other members and friends of the congregation for information, assistance and kindly encouragement in the work of preparation. To Pastor Leisse, of the Reformed congregation, we owe the autobiographical sketch which appears in Chapter XIII.

To J. H. Zerbey and his efficient staff of the "Republican" printing establishment at Pottsville, who kindly consented to rush the matter, placed in their hands at a very late day, into type, through presses and the book binder's bench, so as to make it possible to place this book into the hands of the people of the community at the occasion for which it was written, we owe also particular mention, and are proud to say that the entire book, except the paper, is a Schuylkill County product.

We have endeavored to gather and write nothing but verified history. If, in our haste, we should have overlooked any material incidents, it will not have been the fault of our purpose, but of our ability ; and if, in writing we have sometimes lost the historian under the pen of the apologist, we have committed a fault for want of time to properly revise ; which, regretable as it may be, we trust may not militate against its historical value.

As a history of the community surrounding New Ringgold, so far as it presumes to be such of her early days, this work is written especially for the members and friends of the congregation of Friedens Church. Only 500 copies are printed, of which only 450 will be sold.

With these explanatory lines, to introduce it, we send the little work on its mission, bespeaking for it a charitable criticism, and pray the God of all grace and peace to add His benediction to the congregation which has formed the subject of this sketch.

H. A. WELLER.

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FRIEDENS CHURCH

AT THE

LITTLE SCHUYLKILL.

CHAPTER I.

ALONG THE LITTLE SCHUYLKILL.

IN the lower valley between the Kittatiny range of Blue Mountains bounding the horizon on the east to the second range of hills and mountains westward that mark the steps of a giant stairway up the slopes of the Anthracite coal belt of Pennsylvania, until it has climbed the broad altitude of the Tuscaroras, flows the now black water of the Little Schuylkill in its course southward to meet the waters of the rippling Manayunk, (Schuylkill River), at the gap of the blue Kittatiny where is now the borough of Port Clinton.

Ascending this branch northward from its confluence with the Schuylkill River a distance of some ten miles as the crow flies, we come to the beautiful spurs of the Tuscarora hills among which the stream wends its tortuous course in hide-and-seek fashion and laughs back its own echo to the rolling hills. Here came the fathers who planted our congregation; and here has she flourished and brought up her children under her own vine and forest tree.

Friedens Church is locally and historically the "Church at the Little Schuylkill." For a time after her founding the fathers, in writing to their friends in the fatherland, lovingly referred to her as their "Friedens Kirche, unweit der Kleinen Schulkil, in Braunschweig, ueber den Blauen Bergen in Berks County in Pennsylvanien." (Friedens Church, in

the vicinity of the Little Schuylkill in Brunswick, beyond the Blue Mountains in Berks County, Pennsylvania).

For a century and a half the western slopes of the Kittatiny have heard the breathings of the daily morning and evening devotions of the families composing the congregation, as the sound of the woodsman's axe gave way to the furrow of the plow and the swish of the grain cradle or the rattle of the more modern reaper, echoing from hill to hill the story of material progress also.

Looking back over the century and more, we, Lutheran and Reformed people of the Little Schuylkill valley, point with a degree of pardonable pride to those sturdy yeomen who came over the mountains from Maxatawney, especially after the "skedaddle of 1756"[1] or up the dale of the winding Lizzard Creek[2] from where it empties into the Lehigh River on the east, and felled the forests to build them homes; and when we see the rock from which we were hewn we feel no shame.

Here it was that they thought of us and our children as they hewed the logs to build rough school houses where their children might be taught to

1. As early as the year 1740, at least, the pioneers of these parts had pushed from Maxatawney township in Berks County and the districts of Allemangel across the Blue mountains to build themselves homes on this side of the mountain. During the agitations that stirred through the French and Indian wars, the Indians who called these forests their homes became very much moved against the progress of the whites, and committed many atrocious depredations upon these white settlers whose nearest neighbors at that time were often ten to fifteen miles removed. These depredations increased in number, though the government of Pennsylvania had established frontier forts to which many of our people escaped for safety from time to time. The nearest of these forts at the time was Fort Franklin north of where Kepnersville now stands, along the Lizzard Creek. In 1755 and 1756 these depredations of the Indians and the massacres committed by them became so frequent that the white people were in mortal terror continually, and fled for safety south-east across the Blue mountains into Maxatawney. This is spoken of as the "Skedaddle of 1756." When the troubles with the French and Indians ceased, the Indians again quieted down and many of the "skedaddlers" returned only to find all their cabins burnt and their fields laid waste. But, with renewed trust and fervent prayer they set about again to set up their home in the wilderness.

2. A little to the eastward of New Ringgold, near Kepner's is the "Schweinebuckel," (hog's back), which is the watershed from whence the waters flow southward and westward, tributary to the Little Schuylkill, and northward and eastward, tributary to the Lizzard Creek, which empties 18 miles eastward into the Lehigh river near Bowmansville, just north of the mountains from Slatington, Pa.

remain steadfast in the faith of their fathers; and where they themselves might gather from time to time to hear the school-master, on the Lord's Day, read to them the ever precious gospel and a sermon from some "Predigt Buch."[3] Here it was that advancing prosperity at length enabled them to erect a more pretentious House of Prayer, and to obtain the services of a minister of the Gospel who should break to them the bread of life and minister unto them the word of power.

A retrospect of a century and a half makes our hearts bound with reverent gratitude to the memory of those noble forebears, while if we looked back two centuries we would find no trace of civilization, and the only music to greet us were the echoing ripple of the leaping waters of the laughing stream through the virgin forest, broken in its harmony only by the discordant whoop of the red man or the piercing scream of a panther or catamount. It is within the memory of living inhabitants that the forests on these foothills were filled with bears and catamounts, while the fleet deer looked down upon some little log cabin, or even more pretentious plank house, nestling in the clearing at the foot of the hills. It has come to pass within the last quarter century that hunters have tracked the bear to his lair on the hills just back of the church, and the people returning from worship have been startled by the fleet-footed deer.

Beautiful for situation indeed is Thy Zion, Lord; and the house of Thine habitation! To the southwestward a mile and a quarter distant lies the vil-

3. It is remarkable how our forefathers provided in the wilderness for schools almost before they built their own cabins. Many have been the stories told the writer around the fire of a winter's evening about the peculiarities of the schools and the idiosyncrasies of the old schoolmasters who, in the absence of regular ministers of the gospel in those early days, used to gather the parents and children together at the school house on the Lord's day and read aloud to these devout men and women thirsting for the life-giving word, a sermon from some printed book of sermons. The possession of such a book of sermons or of a copy of "Arndt's True Christianity" marked the school master as an invaluable treasure in the community, even though his personal morality were often of the most questionable type. The possessor of such a book who could read aloud a sermon from it to the assembled worshippers, was certain of a most munificent support as reckoned by the standards of wealth among these people at that time.

lage of McKeansburg, once a proud aspirant for the location of the county seat of the newly erected county of Schuylkill; and defeated only by a trick.[4] To the eastward, five eights of a mile distant, just across the Little Schuylkill is the more modern town of New Ringgold.[5] To the northeastward, a mile distant, in a most beautiful "kettle" around which all the mountains seem to end abruptly; and from which they radiate as the spokes of a wheel from a sunken hub, lies the village of Hecla[6] in all

4. McKeansburg, Schuylkill Haven, and Orwigsburg were rival candidates for the location of the county seat with claims nearly equally balanced. It is said that Peter Fraily, Daniel Graeff and others induced the owners of the sawmills along the Mahannan creek, which runs near Orwigsburg, to detain the water in the mill ponds for a time just before the commission came; and, when the commissioners were at Orwigsburg, at a preconcerted signal, (the blowing of a dinner horn), they hoisted their flood gates, and the stream, swollen in consequence, so strongly impressed the commissioners with the superior manufacturing facilities of the place that they decided in its favor, although otherwise McKeansburg had most favorably impressed them.—R. A. Wilder. "History of Schuylkill County."

McKeansburg was for many years the most prominent village in this section, and was laid out from lands of Solomon Whetstone and Balzer Bock in 1803. It was market place for the lumber from the northern townships of Schuylkill, Rush, and the Catawissa Valley; whence it was hauled by teams to McKeansburg and thence to the river below the village to be floated down the river to Reading, Pottstown and Philadelphia. Little manufacturing interest ever developed there, and it is now a staid village of some 250 inhabitants. It was named in honor of Governor McKean of Pennsylvania

5. New Ringgold was named in honor of Major Ringgold the first officer who fell in the Mexican war. Originally the land where the town now stands—a plot of 530 acres—was owned by Daniel Focht; but the town was not laid out in lots until 1867 when Hon F. W. Hughes owned the property. The oldest house in the borough, so far as now known, is now occupied by David Becker. This borough was the popular "Half-way-station" for the teamsters who used to haul the coal from the Tamaqua district to Port Clinton where the same was loaded on canal boats for transportation to the large cities and the seaboard. The Little Schuylkill bronch or division of the P. & R. R. R., which passes through the place, is successor to the wooden railway which was the first of its kind in this section—one of the first in the country—and extended from Tamaqua through New Ringgold to Port Clinton. Daniel J. Yost, who among others remembers this first railway well tells us that it had parallel timbers, 6 inches wide and 8 inches high with an iron strip or rail 5-8 inch by 2 inches nailed on top. The trains of coal cars were drawn by horses, some teamsters hauling as many as 8 to 12 loaded cars of coal with their teams.

Those were great days for New Ringgold, which, since the advent of the steam railway locomotives, has become a staid borough; and the late misfortune of the burning down of the Star Shoe Factory (1898), where a large number of people had found employment, has been a heavy blow, not only leaving it without manufacturing interests but causing many people to remove to other fields offering more employment.

For a number of years a large iron furnace was maintained here: but, proving profitless it was abandoned, and after years of idleness it was torn down and removed in the summer of 1897.

6. Hecla was surveyed in lots about 1851 by Mathias Richards. For many years large iron forges were maintained here, and at different points along the Little Schuylkill. The ruins of many of

its panoramic beauty. To the north and the west just across the range of hills into which Friedens Church is set as the central figure in a rolling background, lies the thickly populated and fertile valley to which our fathers on account of its fertility gave the suggestive, if not euphonious name of "Schmalzthal," (Lard Valley). Thus with the church as the centre, there radiate to all points of the compass fertile slopes and vales which have yielded their harvests rich and abundant in every season, and our people have gathered here to the altars of the Lord of the Harvest rendering grateful tribute of thanksgiving, while in their hearts the great husbandman has sown the seed of life which groweth and ripeneth unto the harvest of eternity, unto the glory of God and the saving of the nations.

Looking just beyond the bounds of the field of the congregation we are situate between the rich farm country of the Lebanon and Lehigh Valleys, on the south and east, and the coal belt to our immediate north and west, only seven or eight miles distant,—the connecting link that binds the desolate surface area of the coal lands, not inaptly mentioned in maps of 1748 as "The Wilderness of St. Anthony" to the limestone bottom lands of Lehigh and Berks counties. And this is the land and country, just beyond the Blue Mountains of the Kittatiny range, of which more than a century since that great Lutheran layman, Conrad Weiser,[7] after passing for the first time through its forest glebe

these can yet be seen. The advent of steam forges and rolling-mills, however, made hand forges profitless and the industry was gradually abandoned. Hecla is a centre of the ice industry along the Little Schuylkill. The Knickerbocker Ice Company, and Saylor Brothers maintain large ice-dams at this place and give employment to the people. In 1897 the large ice houses of the Knickerbocker people were destroyed by fire, igniting from a spark from a passing locomotive, and have not been rebuilt. This was a hard blow to the prosperity of Hecla.

7. John Conrad Weiser, Jr., born Nov. 2, 1696, at Afstaedt, in the dutchy of Wurtemberg, Germany; came to this country at the age of 14 with his father. He lived with the Indians for months at a time and so learned their language, character, and customs. He settled at Tulpehocken in 1729, and became an invaluable agent to the government in treaties with the Indians and as general interpreter. Pennsylvania and Virginia both employed him on dangerous missions to the Indian tribes, reaching as far as Canada. He attained great celebrity. Full accounts of his work are contained in the "Records and Archives" published by the State of Pennsylvania. In 1754 he was nominated and appointed a trustee of the

in his tour of inspection of the frontier forts on the Blue Mountains, reports to the Council at Philadelphia that "The country is for the most part a great pine forest which will never be of much value."[8]

Society for Propagating Christian nowledge among the Germans of Pennsylvania. He was commissioned as a Colonel of the provincial militia, Oct. 17, 1755. About this time he was thrown much in contact with Count Zinzendorf, the Moravian, and accompanied him and several missionaries into the wilderness, and was instrumental in starting the Herrnhuter mission among the Indians. He died at Heidelberg, July 13, 1760. (See Life of Conrad Weiser, by C. Z. Weiser, D.D.

8. Vid. Penna., Archives, and Frontier Forts along the Blue mountains.

CHAPTER II.

DAYS BEFORE SCHUYLKILL CO., WAS NAMED.—PIONEERS.*

WHEN the pioneers crossed the Kittatiny wilds and built their cabins along the Little Schuylkill's sloping banks, this country was yet a part of that vast unpurchased tract beyond the frontier included in neither of the three original counties.[1] After its purchase from the Indians in 1749 by Thomas Penn, Governor, it was incorporated into the county of Lancaster, and three years later was taken, together with the northern part of Philadelphia County, and called the County of Berks. This was in 1752.

The Indians that inhabited Eastern Pennsylvania at the time William Penn divided the Province into three counties, (Bucks, Philadelphia and Chester), were the Lene Lenapes. The whites called them the Delawares. Tradition, which we can not now

1. Originally, (1682), William Penn divided his province into the three counties of Bucks, on the east, Philadelphia in the centre, and Chester, on the west. In 1723 the proprietaries purchased from the Indians the lands north of the Tulpehocken to the Kittatiny mountains, thus extending the frontier of Pennsylvania to the Blue mountains. This purchase moved the governor to erect a new county from the original county of Chester; and in 1729 the county of Lancaster was created including all the present county of Berks west of the Schuylkill river, together with Lebanon county. In the year 1749, Thomas Penn purchased from the Indians, for the sum of £500, all their title to the lands lying north of the Blue mountains between the Delaware river on the east and the Susquehanna river on the west, embracing, either in whole or in part, the present counties of Dauphin, Schuylkill, Northumberland, Columbia, Luzerne, Monroe, Carbon and Pike. The boundaries south and eastward were the Kittatiny mountains, and north and westward, a line drawn from a point of the mountain at the mouth of Mahanoy creek to the mouth of the Lackawaxen creek at the New York State boundary, and at the junction of that creek with the Delaware river; being 125 miles long and 30 miles in average breadth, or, about 3,750 square miles. This purchase necessitated a further distribution into counties. Therefore, in 1752, the northern portions of the counties of Philadelphia and Lancaster, respectively, together with the newly acquired tract, or such portion of the newly acquired tract as lay north of these respective counties and beyond the Blue mountains were erected into the county of Berks. In 1811 the present county of Schuylkill was erected from that part of Berks county lying north of the Blue Mountains, and a portion also of Northampton county. Schuylkill county, therefore, includes all of the original county of Berks beyond the Blue mountains, except only the extreme northern part, which was annexed to Northumberland county in 1772.

trace to authentic narrative, says that a small tribe calling themselves Mahantongo's, had their village on the hills known as Sculp Hill, a little south of Orwigsburg.

The first white settlements in the region bordering the Blue mountains or Kittatiny range, on the southeastern slope, were made during the first decades of the eighteenth century. Some families of Lutheran Germans from the Palatinate had first settled with their countrymen in the Schoharie Valley of New York State; but, having been despoiled of their improved lands in that garden spot by the serpent of shrewd scoundrelism which, on the part of some unscrupulous persons at Albany, claimed the fruits of the hard labor of these honest German yeomen under the pretext of a legal right, some fifty families journeyed southward, and, under the friendly guidance of some Indians, floated their goods and women and children on rafts three hundred miles down the Susquehanna, the men driving the cattle along the banks, until they came to the mouth of the Swatara. Thence they came up the Swatara, some settling along the Tulpehocken near Stouchsburg,[2] while a few having learned of other German Palatines settling further eastward, crossed the Schuylkill near Hamburg and pushed on as far as Wessnersville. This was in 1723. Others followed the same route in 1729, with whom came Conrad Weiser, the historic scout and interpreter. There is no record that any of these later comers crossed the Schuylkill to settle there.

Other German Palatines had landed at Philadelphia from the fatherland.[3] Of these many pushed

2. Vid. Reports of Dr. H. M. Muhlenberg. "Hall. Nachrichten." and Dr. J. W. Mann's "Deutsche Einwanderung in Amerika."

3. The majority of these Germans reached Philadelphia in a condition of utter destitution and poverty. Having been unable to pay for their passage across the sea they were on their arrival bound over to a state of servitude for periods of from three to seven years, until the money due for their passage had been earned by long and arduous labor. There were many harsh and cruel features connected with this system of slavery. Families were torn asunder, their members separated for years, and sometimes never re united. It is obvious that the disadvantages, which our forefathers of this section of country underwent, were many and great. Being looked upon then, as a sort of chattel slaves, they were at once under a social cloud and looked down upon by their Welsh, Swedish, English, and

northward through New Providence, Hanover and Oley to the districts at the foot of the Blue mountains, which districts were then called Allemangel.[4] These were for the most part Lutheran Christians. Later also came other settlers, mostly by way of the State of New York who had pushed their way down the valleys of Eastern Pennsylvania. Some of these found their way down the Catawissa valley until they met the Germans who had crossed the Kittatiny mountains, and fraternized with them and built their cabin homes among these hills and valleys. These were for the most part Swiss and German Reformed Christians.

The want of roads and the absence of all means of transportation by wagons across the mountains, together with the superstitious fears[5] which the

Quaker neighbors and masters, as well as by their German compatriots of more prominent good fortune. Dr. A. Spaeth, in his address, "Light at Eventide," delivered on the occasion of the sesquicentennial of Old Trappe Church, September 26, 1893, said, "Their moral and intellectual development, their progress and prosperity in every direction was hindered. Nor was their religious life in a satisfactory condition. Under the state church of the fatherland, these emigrants had never learned to take care of the administration and management of congregational matters. When this burden was thrown upon them in their new home, they hardly knew how to help themselves; and, in the absence of good pastors and faithful, experienced counsellors, it is no wonder that their religious and churchly condition was not far from chaos. Moreover many of these people, even before leaving their former home, had been estranged from the faith of their fathers. They were at the very start animated by a spirit of sectarianism, which, in many cases, was the principal motive for leaving their former home and seeking these western shores."

In this connection we learn also from Hallische Nachrichten that many of these German parents were obliged to traffic and sell their children like cattle, so that they, the parents, might go free. The children thus sold or bound over, would then have to serve for the payment of the parents' debt until they attained the age of 21 years; and, as often happened, they were frequently taken away from their parents so young, and removed to other parts so that the parents often times did not know where they were taken, and never saw them again. (Hall. Nach. Vol. I, p. 281).

4. Allemangel was the historical name designating a large region including Albany township in Berks county, and Lynn township in Lehigh county, lying at the foot of the Blue mountains; which district is drained by the Ontolaunee creek and its tributaries. (Ontolaunee is an Indian name, meaning Maiden). The name Allemangel is of German origin and is descriptive of the condition of the people living there at the time, who were wanting many of the goods and necessaries of life to make them happy. (Alle-mangel, wanting in all things). No doubt, as Dr. J. H. Dubbs, in a note to p. 304 of "Henry's History of the Lehigh Valley" says:—Allemangel was an appropriate designation for this poor district in contrast with the fertile lands of its neighboring district on the southeast, which, on account of its fertility, was termed Egypt. (Vid. Hall. Nach. Vol. I. p. 414).

5. To trace and relate the ancient legends and superstitions of these earnest people is a pleasant task which I have set for myself, and hope at some future day to find time to relate in succinct

sallies of marauding Indians across the mountains had inspired, at first deterred the settlers at the east and south of the Kittatiny mountains from going far from their settlements. Nevertheless, there were some adventurous spirits among them who penetrated the forests across the range, looking about for some sunny slope with cool unfailing spring among the ferns which grew rank and luxurious among the old forest trees, soon erected their "Shacks"[6] for shelter as well as defense against predatory beasts and men along the tributaries of the Little Schuylkill north of the mountains. Thence they attacked the sturdy oaks and mast-pines that densely covered the ground. The blows of the keen axe echoed and re-echoed in the still morning air, at high noon, and in the dewy eve when the stars

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form; but, the especial superstition which is here referred to is related by tradition to have been inspired in the minds of many of the more timid of the people who, though they had heard of Indians, had not actually seen Indians in all their journey from Philadelphia; and, now, being settled at the foot of the Blue mountains, they for the first time saw these wild men as they descended from the mountains in maraudering cruelty upon some of their cabins to burn and massacre. In some instances the accounts of eye witnesses became so exaggerated by imagination and frequent repetition that some of these people easily persuaded themselves that the Blue mountains marked the borderland between the habitation of Beelzebub, the prince of hell, and the habitat of man. Of similar nature is the story, yet repeated among the old people with much sincerity, that at a place just northwest of Adamsdale, where the Schuylkill Valley branch of the Penn'a. R. R. now passes through a rising rock-ridge, was the place where Satan, in olden days, gathered his princes in council, and planned his diabolical schemes of destruction, rapine, and hellish cruelties against the white people, to the execution of which he and his cohorts took upon themselves the form and fashion of Indians. (Comp—Capt. D. C. Henning's "Tales of the Blue Mountains.")

6. These schacks or temporary shelters were formed by placing a pole in the forks of upright saplings of suitable height from the ground, either of natural growth or planted for the purpose a suitable space apart. Other saplings were then cut and leaned against this ridge pole at a slope which gave breadth of base sufficient for a small room in which to sleep and store a few supplies. The openings in these sides between the saplings were closed with clay, bark, or anything that might serve to keep out at least a portion of the driving rain or the cold. The bed was usually made at the closed end of the schack, which was closed by driving stakes into the ground and binding them to the slopes with hickory withes; and this bed usually consisted of sticks laid together on supports a few inches from the ground, upon which were laid sweet smelling hemlock boughs and the dried skins of such wild animals as the trusty rifle had brought low for food. Luxury was not dreamed of in those days of small beginnings. For chairs the sawed off end of a log set up on end was the height of the fashion; and, where the pioneer was extremely fastidious, he would have a table, made by splitting a log in halves, smoothing the flat side with his axe, and with an augur boring four holes in the round side to insert four sticks for legs; and from this the frugal meal, embellished with the accompanyment of a good conscience before God, would taste as sweet and be as thankfully eaten as the feast of a king.

blinked their greetings to the lone pioneer. Little by little the trees were felled, causing the Indian hunter to stop in his trail at the crash of the falling pine tree to take a note of the intruder. If the trees were too large for the sturdy pioneer to handle alone, he would "girdle" them by cutting around the whole tree to stop the flow of sap, when soon the foliage withered and the tree died casting no more a shadow to blight the settler's crops.

It were more sweet than profitable to indulge the powers of imagination here to picture some of these pioneers who had left wife or sweetheart beyond the mountains, or perchance, far back in the fatherland; as sitting a-weary after the hard day's toil, alone with God and Nature, or, as bending over some rippling mountain spring to quench the heated thirst, he saw the reflection of his disheveled hair or uncropped beard, only to wonder how soon he might venture to bring to that lonely place the one who, next to God, was to him the source of labor's sweetest inspiration, and whose nimble fingers should shear the roughness away and bring out again the features of physical beauty; but we may not forget that it is history and not fiction that we are to trace today.

An obscure and now impenetrable veil closes over the exact dates when these pioneers first penetrated to the banks of the Little Schuylkill; but, already in the early 40's, we find five young men, three of them with families, penetrating northward, or rather westward, from Maxatawney and Allemangel, across the Blue mountains to build the first cabins of which there is authentic data. These were the three Bensinger brothers, Daniel, Jacob, and Frederick, Philip Schwartz, and John Kuehnle. Frederick Bensinger with his family and two brothers first came into the "Summer Valley" and built their cabin about one and a-half miles eastward from where New Ringgold now is. Philip Schwartz and his family erected their cabin on the south slope

of the Ridge where the Godshall homestead now is. John Kuehnle, the father of the Franz E. Kuehnle, so prominent later in the history of the church, moved further westward, and, crossing the Little Schuylkill somewhere at Rausch's Post Office, settled on the sunny slope of Red Dale in the vicinity of the farm now owned by Jonathan P. Horn. Daniel and Jacob Bensinger had lived with their brother Frederick, but when they had helped him make a little clearing on his "farm" they were restless to move on, and, therefore, built themselves a cabin at the place about a mile westward from McKeansburg, where is now Jonas Kunkel's mill. Jacob now brought his wife to share his "palace in the wilderness," and Daniel moved northward to clear himself a new "plantation" and erected his "lonely hut" in the fertile vale of "Schmalzthal." Here he too soon brought a wife to share his bliss. The only authentic data now available concerning all these earlier settlements is to be gathered, besides tradition, from some old title deeds which recite that these homes in the wilderness existed as early as 1746, and how much earlier we have no way now to determine. These five pioneers as we believe them to have been, were soon followed by others, in some cases at short intervals. On September 14th, 1751, Benjamin Lightfoot "took up" a tract of 175 acres, 69 1-2 perches, &c., of land, on a part of which the church now stands. Ulrich Heiser entered what is now known as Kleckner's Valley and built his cabin about a mile east of where Hecla now stands. Then came Daniel Schwebb and Daniel Koenig, the latter settling in Summer Valley, about where Wm. S. Acker now lives, while the former crossed over the Little Schuylkill and settled as neighbor to Daniel Bensinger in "Schmalzthal." Christopher Beyer came and built his cabin just north of where McKeansburg now is, at the foot of the hills that extend in the rear of the church. George Bacher, John Bolicht and Abraham Seltzer came later, (about 1758). George Bacher settled at the south

slope of the hills just west of Phillip Schwartz's plantation, where the old Bachert homestead now is. John Bolicht, being a relative by marriage of John Kuehnle, brought his family to help and live with the Kuehnle's until he recrossed the Little Schuylkill and cleared a place and built a cabin east of where Rausch's Post Office now is, very probably near where the old Benjamin Nester farm now is. Abraham Seltzer crossed over the ridge that separates McKeansburg from Red Dale and established himself near the place where McKeansburg now stands, most probably near Mr. Nathan Bauscher's farm. Of the Mr. Koch, whose given name is not mentioned in the record which accounts his coming, there is little doubt that it was old father Christophel Koch, who soon returned to either Allemangel or Egypt,[7] where he had a son living, and remained with him.

With the advent of the return after the "skedaddle" came, later also, Bernard Kepner, Sr., who located first near Kepnersville, but soon removed to lands purchased of Benjamin Lightfoot in the vicinity of the present church. Bernhard Kepner Junior built (1769) and kept the first tavern in this section, about 300 yards southwest of the present church, where the land of Mr. S. C. Boyer now is. This tavern was afterward maintained by Henry Kepner and George Neier. Andrew Bankes came in 1759, and built his cabin on the lower valley, below Rausch's station towards Drehersville. These were soon followed by Jacob Dornbach, Jacob Whetstein, Andrew Bolich[8], Balzer Koch, the Henry

7. Vid. Note 4. supra.

8. Andrew Bolich was a nephew of the John Bolicht mentioned before, and settled later near where Steigerwalt's Meeting House now stands.

9. The records of taxables in Brunswick beyond the Blue mountains in Berks county show a larger number in 1770; for, it includes other settlers in Schuylkill county than those with which the research immediately at hand deals; but, judging from the names so recorded we are safe to place our estimate of such taxable persons in the district, resident along the Little Schuylkill and in the community of the Friedens Church, at 146. Quite a large community indeed in those days.

*General Note on the Pioneers of the Little Schuylkill Valley.—R. A. Wilder, in his Chapter 2, "History of Schuylkill County," p. 28 says:—"The outward movement of the frontier waveline of civ-

and Frederick Sassaman families, and a number of others, so that in 1770 there was quite a large community of German Palatines in the district of the present church.[9]

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ilization is always attended by traditions of a phenomenal nature from which it is nearly impossible to deduce anything like historical facts. * * * * The proneness of posterity to make heroes of ancestors who have shouldered the knapsack, the axe, and the rifle, and gone alone into the depths of the forests to hew out and defend a home for themselves and their progeny, is common to every rank of life. The story of individual prowess is transmitted from parents to children by the winter fireside, when storms howl around the lowly cottage and winds sweep down from the hills in mournful cadence as the sorrowful tale of fire and carnage, involving the death of the innocents as well as those of maturer age by the tomahawk and scalping-knife, comes down from the hills of time. Every green spot by sheltering hill or bubbling spring and sunny stream where the ruin of the first settler's cabin is shown, becomes, in these winter tales, a dark and bloody ground." Warned by these opportune words against accepting every tradition as being actual history, we have refrained from recording the thrilling incidents (many of them true, no doubt,) which are related of many of these forefathers, though unfortunately for the pioneers of this country beyond the Blue mountains it is only too true that many a one entered the forest to encroach upon aboriginal claims and secure a home, to be seen no more because his scalp was made a trophy to ornament some red man's lodge, and the spot where sleeps unknown the plucky pioneer, is marked, if at all, by the darker green or the greater luxuriance of the wild flowers only.

CHAPTER III.

INFLUENCES THAT MOULDED CHARACTER.

STRIKINGLY and impressively did Abraham Lincoln define the peculiar responsibilities which our forefathers shouldered as they struck out into the wilderness, when, in his famous Gettysburg speech, he said:—"Our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." Coming as they did through peril of life, and often of personal liberty too, these men brought with them also into the wilderness of the Valley of the Little Schuylkill the spirit of education and religious consecration. How much the influences of nature, with which these pioneers were so intimately thrown together, were powerful in forming or re-forming the characters and destinies of their sons and daughters must be left for the speculative philosopher to determine; yet, it may not be out of place for even the gatherer of historical facts, to stop his research of musty records, and embellished traditions long enough to look about, and see how the mountains, covered with green foliage, and the crisp air laden with the health-giving odors of pine forests,--the deep gorges that widen into broad vales as they slope away from rugged steps, and the mountain springs growing to sunny streams, watering meadow and fenland, exert their inspiring influences upon man until he is lifted up to the loftiest sentiments of liberty, and the noblest aspirations after divinity. In the midst of such surroundings did the German forefathers in the district, now the community of Friedens Church, rear to Freedom her grandest temples,—the church and school,—and the after years proved them and their sons ready to die for the maintenance of the institutions, the spires of which point upward to where centre man's highest

hopes and aspirations.[1] Such sacrifices as were made, especially by the German emigrants from the Palatinate, in those early days, in the districts, until this day conspicuously known as the Pennsylvania Dutch districts, may not again fall to men anywhere in America. But these had come from lands where the principles of the highest type of humanity had long been buried in the selfishness, brutality, and superstition of the dark ages; and here, in the surroundings of nature's peace, they did not rush into the opposite extreme of license; but the peace of God, exemplified in the Son, from Bethlehem's manger to Calvary's cross, arose from the grave of centuries to shed its benign influences upon the hearts and pursuits of men. Its shrines were the mountain homes; and no pen of poet or magic bar of song has ever yet troubled itself to sing the mighty influence for liberty,—true, humane, God-like liberty, that was fostered also in the mountain air which inspired the Pennsylvania German; and conceived in turn, again to bear into the world that child of Heaven,—Peace.[2] They were the men who, when

1. Though in our country the Church and State are and of right ought to be entirely separate, yet it is acknowledged that the Church and the early Church school, have been the rock upon which is founded the prosperity of the State.

2. The pens of Longfellow, Whittier, et al., have made immortal the deeds of the fathers in New England. Washington Irving has done a like service for New York. Historians and Poets have written the story of Virginia. Church historians have accounted the rise and progress of the church east of the Susquehanna and south of Blue mountains. But the Pennsylvania German, though his deeds and sacrifices were as great, and his influence upon the historic development of the nation not a whit less than that of other peoples, was busy moulding and fashioning the prosperity of his adopted land, and the welfare of his descendants; and none took time to set his deeds to rhyme or sing his praises in song. His matter-of-fact phlegm was not given to boasting or exploiting his prowess, and his greatest glory has been to his duty. The Paul Reveres and Evangelines had their counterparts many times over among these German settlers, but their busy nature did not view it as a subject for laying down the plow and the axe to take up the pen of the poet or the lute of the minstrel to recount the tales of the deeds that made a nation. Satisfied to have done his duty to God and his country, the Pennsylvania German told his little story without embellishment of the magic of fine words to his sons and daughters around the hearth fire on a winter's night, and thus, from no selfish motive whatever, but, only because he believes every opportunity a duty, the story has passed from father to son, soon to be forgotten, unless some Moses shall be born in Egypt, who shall record for the world's information the traditions and history of this pious people, or some David arise to set their deeds to the rythm of sweet song. The Pennsylvania Germans can certainly not be justly accuesed of hero-worship. To them there is One and only One who deserves glory, and honor, and power, and dominion forever and forever, and Him alone shall man worship:

their brethren of other extractions cultivated arts of commerce within the frontier lines, pushed the frontier lines of Christian civilization further into the wilderness, and marked every advancing step with their little school houses and log churches. Here also, they impressed their sterling qualities upon their descendants, and the history of our common Country has shown that the children of these sturdy, if phlegmatic, German settlers did honor to their ancestry and their training upon every field where a people could show their loyalty to the principles of Liberty and Peace.* Yet these were also the men who had no ordained pastors to follow them into the wilderness,[3] to break to them the bread of life, or with good and experienced counsel to save them from falling a prey to the wolves in sheep's-clothing that went about in those early days, vagabond imposters who perverted the simple piety of these people to their own pecuniary advantage, or even to their own sectarian fanaticisms.[4] The strife and contentions marking the

3. From J. F. Sachse's "Genesis of the German Lutheran Church in the Land of Penn" we learn, indeed, that some German Lutheran theological students and some "preacners" came to this country of Penn in the early part of the 18th century, and on November 24th, 1703, Justice Falckner was ordained to the Holy ministry at Gloria Dei, the Swedish Lutheran church upon the banks of the Delaware. This was the first ordination of a Protestant clergyman in the Western world. In 1717 Rev. Gerhard Henkel appeared as the pastor of the Lutheran church at Falckner's Swamp. In 1718 Governor Kieth became alarmed at the large influx of German emigrants without pastors of their own faith. In 1719 the first Reformed church was built in Germantown, Pa., and in the next year the first Reformed minister arrived. But for the most part, the Germans, Lutherans, and Reformed, and the sects began to come to the great Kittatiny valley and to cross the Kittatiny mountains without pastor to accompany them, or for many years to come to even follow them. "Thus., first by little groups, and then by thousands the Germans settled the Kittatiny districts," both cis-montain and trans-montain. "By the middle of the century fully one half of the population of Pennsylvania was German. The Lutheran element outnumbered the Reformed two to one. It may be safely asserted that the Lutheran population of Pennsylvania alone in the year 1750 aggregated the enormous figure of 60,000"—(Dr. T. E. Schmauk, in "Old Salem Church" 1898. In 1728 the Penn proprietaries were frightened at the number of Germans coming in and would have been glad to keep them out. But the thrifty, economical settlers soon demonstrated themselves to be a most substantial element in the state, and Penn himself wanted the whole State to be settled by Germans. He therefore set afoot a movement for inducing more German pastors to emigrate to the state to minister unto these flocks.

4. There were in those days a large number of self-constituted wandering preachers, of no character, who officiated for the sake of loaves and fishes. Pennsylvania had a number of such, and we find them spoken of in the lately published "Documentary History

"Confusion"[5] in which Leutbecker,[6] Stover,[7] the Moravian ministers,[8] and Kraft,[9] were participants, echoed its bitterness also across the mountains,—but, happily this people had brought not only their axes and rifles into the wilderness; but as preciously guarded were their bibles, their hymn books, and their "Catechismus Lutherii." The history of the Little Schuylkill Valley today were incomplete in its most important factors if we should omit to men-

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of the Ministerium" as, "the vagabonds who prowl around, and seek to fish in the muddy water." These vagabond preachers not only did much harm to communities where there were no organized congregations, but they were, south of the mountains especially, a constant source of strife in the organized congregations.

5. This has reference particularly to the troubles in the Tulpehocken church. (Vid. Hall. Nach. Vol. I. p.,192.)

6. Monsieur Casper Leutbecker, who lived in the Tulpehocken district, was one of the so-called vagabond preachers, who when the congregation would not have him, promised to use "his influence" in Europe to procure a preacher for them. After a time he told the people a regular preacher was coming for them, and it would be well for them to provide a parsonage for the "Herr Pastor" and his family. The parsonage was built, but when, for a long time, no pastor came Leutbecker exhibited a writing purporting to be a report of the sinking of the vessel in which the expected pastor had sailed, and the loss of all who were thereon. Leutbecker was then given privilege to move into the new parsonage and live there (1734) and had himself accepted as pastor. This caused great divisions and dissension, a minority favored Leutbecker, but the majority favored Casper Stoever.—This was the beginning of the historic "Confusion." (Vid. Hall. Nach. Vol. I. p. 191.)

7. John Casper Stoever was born in Frankenburg, in Hesse, Germany, on December 21, 1707. He landed in Philadelphia, from the ship "Good Will," September 19th, 1728. Was ordained to the ministry in 1733, and served congregations in Trappe, Mode Creek, York, New Holland, Lancaster, Bernville, (Nordkill,) Tulpehocken, Philadelphia and other places. He died in Lebanon County where, on Ascension day, May 13, 1779, at a confirmation service, he suddenly sank down and died.—(Vid. Rev. Dr. F. J. F. Schantz's address, "John Casper Stoever.")

8. The first Moravian Evangelist in America, George Boehnisch, landed at Philadelphia, Sept. 22, 1734, having been sent by Zinzendorf with Christopher Baus and Christopher Wiegner to accompany the Schwenkfelder exiles to America. In 1740 came Andrew Eschenbach, sent by Zinzendorf at the suggestion of Geo. Whitfield, as an evangelist to the Pennsylvania Germans. He arrived in October, and became very active to lead the Germans into the Moravian fold, (Sachse's "German Pietists in Pennsylvania" p. 5.) Zinzendorf himself landed in Philadelphia in the fall of 1741, professing to be a Lutheran and to have the official appointment of "Lutheran Superintendent of Pennsylvania." He went to Tulpehocken in 1742 with Conrad Weiser, and there, by his assumed authority, deposed John Casper Stoever from his ministerial office, thus adding another faction to the great "Confusion." (Vid. Dr. T. Schmauk's "Old Salem in Lebanon," p, 30ff.)

9. Kraft, is described in Hall. Nach. Vol. I. p, 39 as "a vicious old German preacher, who caused much turmoil and strife, because he consciously transgressed the laws of the land, was arrested, and his plantation was confiscated." Dr. H. M. Muhlenberg relates how Kraft stole his pastor's gown or coat. Kraft disappeared, and nothing is found concerning his death or burial. He was of the sect who claimed to need no ordination, but were "directly inspired" (Inspirationist.) Comp. Neidner's Chronicle of Historical Theology, 1855, Vol. I. p. 131f.)

tion the sincere piety which dominated these people, and the influence which the family altar exerted to maintain them steadfast through the turbulence of religious vagaries in those days, as felt more bitterly in the sections of Pennsylvania south and east of the Blue mountains.

In the early 40's the religious ferment of Whitfieldism[10] was particularly felt in the interior of Pennsylvania,—its echoes were heard also in the settlements along the Little Schuylkill, yet it was but a passing emotion here, compared with the more harrassing incursion of the Moravians, who with false claims to be the officially accredited Lutheran ministers to Pennsylvania, crept into the families of the German pioneers also and sowed seeds of fanaticism, and made many of these first settlers waver, though the majority remained bitterly opposed to the methods of the Moravian missionaries. This shameless attempt, by subterfuge to gather the Lutheran Germans into the flock of the "brotherhood," continued and was carried so far that in 1744, Christian Sauer, of Germantown printed a new "Luther's Small Catechism, for use in the Lutheran Congregations of Pennsylvania"; which new catechism had been edited, prepared and annotated by the Moravian Zinzendorf.[11] Christopher

10. George Whitfield was born December 16, 1714, at Bell Inn, Gloucester, England. He was one of the most eloquent pulpit orators of his age. He joined with Wesley in the Methodistic movement, and came as a missionary to Georgia, May 7, 1738. In 1740 he traveled to Pennsylvania, and Dr. Schmank in his "History of Old Salem in Lebanon" says p. 29: "The farmers flocked to hear him from great distances, unmindful of the remonstrances of their Elders, many of them neglected to sow their seed and found themselves in want at the end of the season." Whitfield himself described the power of his own eloquence upon an audience of colliers at Bristol, Eng., in these words: "I soon beheld the white gutters made by their tears which plentifully fell down their black cheeks." He disagreed with Wesley and started his own church. (Presbyterian.) He died at Newberryport, Mass., Sept. 30, 1770.

11. Nicolas Ludwig, Count Zinzendorf, was born at Dresden, Austria, May 26, 1700. He was of Pietist parentage. He fell in love with his cousin, but she rejected him and married another. He seems to have considered this disappointment as a call from Providence to betake himself to some special work for God. Dislike to Lutheran orthodoxy gave him sympathy with the growing rationalism of his day. He built the village of Herrnhut for some exiles from Moravia, and at once fell to work to bring order out of the creed confusions of these exiles, thus becoming the real organizer of the Moravian, or Herrnhuter Brethren. At the request of Whitfield he came to America, (1741) as a professed Lutheran preacher, and his attempts here were possibly more sincere than judicious. Had he

Beyer's house was the stopping place, and his barn the auditorium, in the vicinity of our immediate history, where held forth some of the itinerant Moravian, (pseudo-Lutheran), missionaries of whom 120 had started out from the newly founded Bethlehem Church, going two by two among the Germans of Pennsylvania. While all these agitations left their impress also upon the pioneers of the Little Schuylkill, nevertheless when Sauer's Catechism came among them they compared it with the Catechismus Lutherii, copies of which had been brought by many from the fatherland, with the result that they rejected the Germantown edition and maintained their rigid adherence to the faith. Cheerfully recognizing, and greatfully appropriating what the fathers in the Reformation had proved, these German-Pennsylvanians arose against all attempts at deception, and, once their suspicions being aroused, they were ever afterwards wary to detect imposters. Though others style them as dull, slow, and hard-hearted, they, according to the light which was in them, wavered not in the foundation principles of their Faith; but maintained them as they maintained their liberty.

All these agitations of those early days, nevertheless, operated to disturb the equipoise of the simple piety of these, our forefathers in the community, and instilled in them a spirit of distrust of men; and, as Carlysle says:—"The thing a man does practically believe, the thing a man does practically lay to heart, and know for certain concerning his vital relations to this mysterious universe, and his duty and destiny there, that is, in all things, the primary thing for him, and creatively determines all the rest," so also did the phlegmatic resistance of these German Pennsylvanians of the Little Schuylkill Valley, rise to determine against all attempts at their religions

succeeded to have himself accepted as "Superintendent of the Lutheran church," it is probable that he would have made some progress in his pet scheme to draw all separatists and mystics, e. g., Schwenkfelders, Seventhday Baptists &c., into a spiritual denomination on a quasi-Lutheran basis and on the foundation of the Augustana. He died May 9th, 1760.

enthrallment, and this feeling grew until when Muhlenberg[12] and the Synod of Pennsylvania took up the active work of the church in Pennsylvania, even they, for years, were viewed with distrust, and in some sections of this trans-mountain district, were designated as the "Verketzerte Muhlenbergienser" (Heretic Muhlenbergiensiens).[13]

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12. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, the patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America was born at Eimbeck, electorate of Hanover, Germany, Sept. 6th, 1711. He was one of the first students of the University of Goettingen, after his preliminary education had been finished at Zellerfelt. After completing his course, he was set apart as a missionary to India; but, through the earnest efforts of the Rev. Dr. Fr. M. Ziegenhagen, of London, who had, through many requests become interested in finding suitable pastors for the Germans of the Province of Pennsylvania, Muhlenberg was sent to minister unto these people in America. He landed at Charleston, South Carolina, September 23, 1742,—and on November 25, of the same year, at 8 o'clock in the morning he set his foot for the first time on the soil of Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia, the field to which he was providentially called. To recount his work in a foot note here were impossible. Suffice it to say here, that he brought order out of chaos which he found among the Germans. He organized the Synod of Pennsylvania (1747) and brought to the people again by organized effort and indefatigable personal labors, the true liturgical worship of the Lutheran church. He built the foundations upon which the church in America has risen with her institutions of education and charity. He dug deep to plant the root from which an educated and regular ministry could spring up to meet the wants of the church, not only in Pennsylvania, but over all America. His reports, to the Halle institutions, of his labors,—well annotated by the late Rev. Dr. J. W. Mann and issued in two volumes, ought to be found in every household, where people are interested to know the fundamental history which made America great. His pastoral labors were immediately confined to the congregations at New Providence, Hanover, and Philadelphia, but over the length and breadth of Pennsylvania, east of the Susquehanna, and even up in New York, as well as in the Raritan districts of New Jersey his voice was heard in many a family, and his counsel sought by the congregations. His activities were little short of miraculous. He fell asleep in Jesus repeating the last verse of Gerhard's immortal hymn. "Befiehl du deine Wege" etc. on Sunday morning October 7, 1787, and was buried at the side of his beloved Augustus Church, at Trappe, where his grave is marked by a very unpretentious marbel tomb, on which the inscription ends with the words: "Who and what he was future times will know without a monument of stone."

(Let every lover of his Country's history procure and read "The Life and Times of Dr. H. M. Muhlenberg" by Dr. J. W. Mann, 8 vos. Published by Lutheran Book Store, Philadelphia.)

13. This is recorded in the ancient documents of the Zion's church, (or Red Church) in West Brunswick Township, Schuylkill county, about 7 miles southwest of Friedens church. No doubt this feeling thus engendered, was one of the causes why in the Halle Records, and the histories of the church in America, mention is never made of the Lutheran movement in the districts just beyond the Blue mountains.

*It is an historic fact that in the records of the wars of our country from the Revolution down to the war just closing with Spain, Schuylkill county has always responded with a larger number of ready men, in proportion to population, than any other county in the Nation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BIRTH OF FRIEDENS CHURCH.

THE exact date of the origin of the congregation of Friedens Church dates back to the early fifties of the last century, possibly earlier. The traditions presented are so unanimous upon this point, and the fact that the communion vessels bear the inscribed date of 1756,[1] make this a safe designation of time. Yet, we have found the subject most difficult to investigate. That there was no formal church building, as such, before 1798 is evident from such fragmentary records as remain.[2] That "for a long time" the people worshiped on the Sabbath in the log school house standing near the present site of Friedens Church is equally mentioned in old fragments of record. Whether the congregation was formally organized in those early days, and officers elected, is a matter of tradition rather than of record; but a recital of the purchase of an additional tract of land by the "Vorsteher" in 1768[3] would indicate such an organiza-

1. An engraving made from a photograph, in this book, shows this old set of communion vessels bearing the inscription "K. H. 1756." The vessels are all of pewter, and have been well preserved indeed. They have served the Lutheran and Reformed congregations of Friedens church during all this time, and are still regularly used on the occasions of the administration of the sacraments.

In this book is an engraving of another set of communion vessels the flagon of which is broken at the pedestal, otherwise this set is also well preserved. The peculiar form of the chalice will be noted. It is said that this set was brought by some Reformed immigrants, and was for some time used by them in the communion, but the Flagon being broken, and the Luaheran chalice being more in conformity with the shape of the churchly vessels, they were stored away, and the Lutheran vessels used by both congregations. This set bears no date excepting the maker's date at London, 1789.

2. A very old document of which the upper half of the first page of the folded parchment is torn away and lost, recites the facts.

3. The fragment remaining of this document recites in German, as follows:—"Fundaments of the Christian religion having been taught here in our school, we desire also that such may be done by our descendants, that their beloved children be so raised that the German schools may not only be maintained, but enlarged to meet all needs to advance them to a most flourishing condition; and since land is rapidly being taken up all about us we ask our deacon, (Vorsteher), Jacob Wetstein, to take up another piece of land con-

OLD COMMUNION VESSELS, STILL USED AT FRIEDENS CHURCH.

CHALICE.
(BEARING DATE 1756.)

BAPTISMAL LAVER.
PLATTENS.

FLAGON.

tion existing at that time at least. The earliest remaining records of baptisms are fragmentary; but indicate that such sacrament was administered by the "Evangelisch-Luterischer Schul-meister" (Evangelical Lutheran Teacher) in 1769.[4] Who administered, if at all, the Sacrament of the Altar does not appear, yet the fact of the communion vessels bearing the earlier date, together with the fact that at the date when the first Friedens Church, as such, was built (1798) and permission granted the Reformed people to worship there, provision was also made to permit the Reformed to use the "Lutheran Communion vessels which have been used by us (the Lutherans) heretofore," warrants the acceptation of the tradition that already before the year 1760 itinerant preachers visited the people at this place once every six months to serve them. Whether among such were any who effected a formal organization of a congregation we cannot positively determine; but, such fragmentary evidences as appear creditable, would indicate that such formally organized Lutheran congregation did exist here. We know that a delegate from these people visited the older congregation at Red Church[5] (Zion's in West Brunswick,) and consulted Rev. Daniel Schumacher in 1770, to ask him to help them to pro-

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tiguous to this Evangelical Lutheran land, which shall serve for the enlargement of the Evangelical Lutheran school and church lands in Brunswick township, called Berks county, in the vicinity of the Little Schuylkill, were the beloved" * * * at this point a part of the document is again lost. On the back of this fragment appears the date, 1768, over the words "and so say we." Signed.

CHRISTOPHER BEYER,
ANDREAS NEIFER.

4. This entry is made on the inside cover of an old and well preserved copy of "Luther's Catechism," and reads as follows:—"Today was baptized in the vicinity of the Little Schuylkill in Brunswick Magdalena, the third child of Andrew Young, and his wife Magdalena. She was born in the 12th week after Trinity, Anno 1779, on Wednesday morning at half after three o'clock. Done the 4th day of October, Anno 1779, by the Evangelical Lutheran School-master."

5. Zion's Church, or Red Church, as it is more familiarly called, is the oldest church in "Brunswick, beyond the Blue mountains in Berks, near the Schuylkill river." It was founded and the first church building erected in 1755. It was served by Pastor Schumacher in 1770, who, if he even was not an ordained minister of the gospel, nor of savory moral character, as some historians indicate, at least was very careful to open well kept congregational records; and, his personal dairy, recording many historic incidents seems to have been lost after the death of Dr. B. M. Schmucker, when Dr. S's papers were transferred, with his library, to the Theological Semi-

cure a teacher for them. Moreover we know that a number of the people were somewhat dissatisfied with the moral character of their school-master in 1770, and started a movement to build a new school house further northeastward, which movement waxed stronger until some twenty years later it resulted in the organization of the congregation of Zion's Church,[6] in West Penn Township, about seven miles south of Tamaqua.

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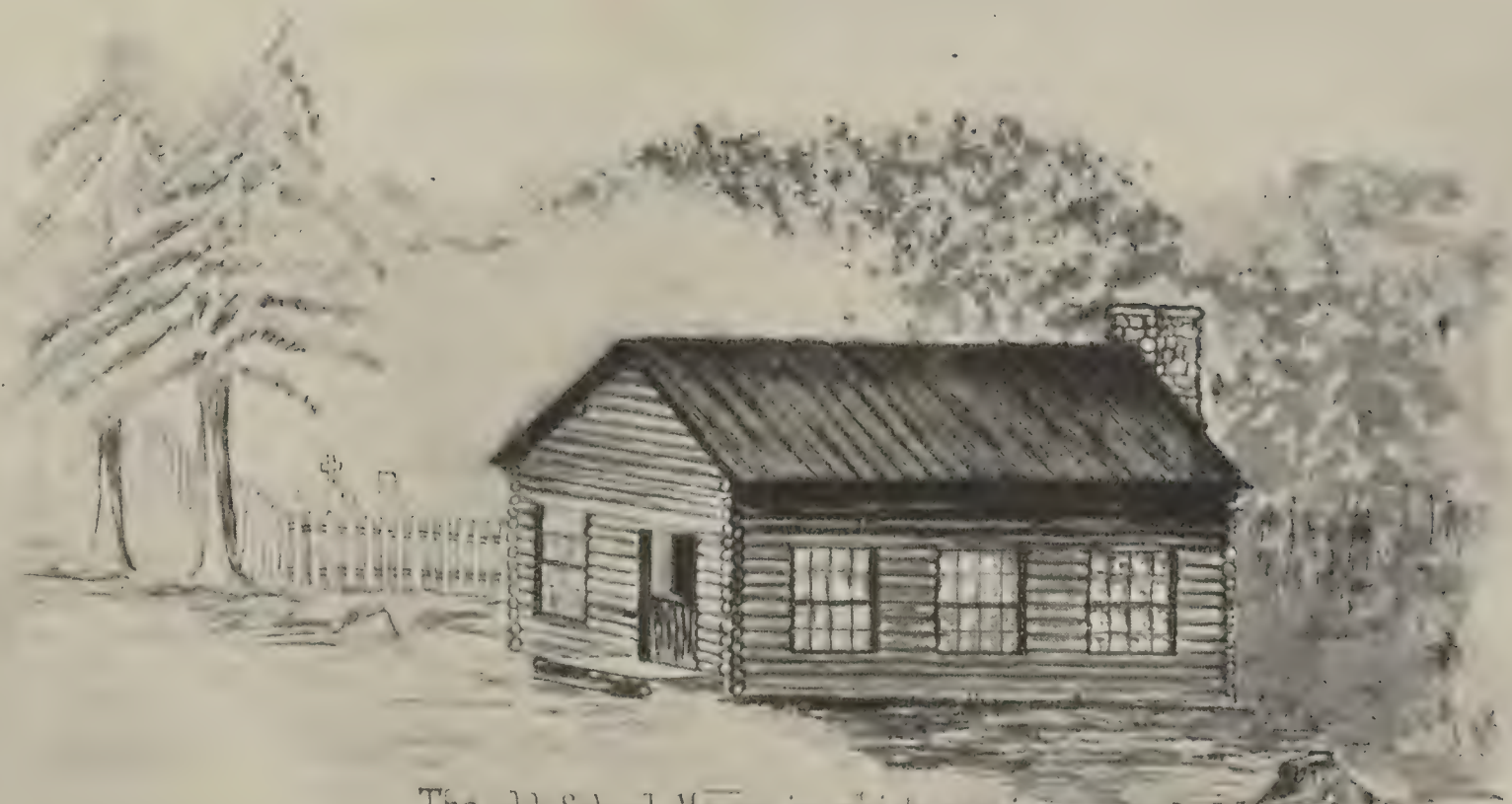
nary at Philadelphia, (1889.) Fortunately, our predecessor, Rev. I. N. S. Erb deceased, had, during his lifetime, by the courtesy of Dr. Schmucker, obtained a transcript of such items as were of interest in the history of Zion's church; and this came into our hands when we succeeded to the pastorate of this parish after the demise of Rev. Erb, 1888.

6. Vid.—"Memorial History of the Wilkes-Barre Conference, 1898," p. 31ff.



The old School House in which services were held prior to the building of the first Church, 1798. — from descriptions as returned by an old member; and a pencil sketch [illegible] man "Salter". —— Situate on site where the present church is built. ——
Supposed to have been built in 1760.

CHAPTER V.

THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE BY THE LITTLE SCHUYLKILL.

WHEN we view the rapid growth of the Pennsylvania German communites in the middle of the last century, and remember that in the single summer and fall of 1749, when the lands beyond the Kittatiny mountains were purchased, more than 12,000 emigrants arrived from the Fatherland, we cannot wonder that the early 50's saw an impetus given to everything that would tend to the welfare of the people. The anxiety of the people who settled here, for providing for the education of their children in "the fundamentals of the Christian religion that they may be led to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ" was a motive for the establishment of such common schools even before the settlers themselves had finished building their cabins and clearing the land.

Though many other things are shrouded under the veil of oblivion, it has repaid all our research to be able to find a pen picture of the old log school house by the Little Schuylkill. The nearest authentic data places the building of the school house in the year 1755. It was built of logs, cut to lengths and notched at the ends to fit firmly together at the corners of the building. It had a great stone fireplace and stone chimney at the rear, or west end. It had no floor but the bare ground kneaded hard and smooth. It had three windows on each side, "of real glass," and one window and a ledge door at the front. The roof was made of clap-boards split by the men from logs. There were at first no writing boards, or desks, but these were furnished later by fastening the slanting boards along the wall at a height even with the window ledge. The seats for the children were made of puncheons

or slabs set on blocks and without backs. The schoolmaster's seat was in the corner toward the fire place. The men, women, and boys all helped in the building of the school-house. Stones and timber were plentiful in the immediate vicinity. It is said that the women carried stones and made mortar for building the great chimney. Wood fires on the open hearth served to heat the room during cold weather and the boys used to spend the noon recess hours splitting up logs for the fire. The rafters and walls were soon charred with smoke; but all took pride in their school. Who was the schoolmaster in those early days is unhappily shrowded in oblivion also; but we are fortunate in having found a fragment of an agreement, evidently between the schoolmaster and some one in authority to employ him, in which is the following fragment of provision, which evidently served as a model for the article in the church ordinance later adopted by the congregation; since its wording is identical, though this paper fragment is evidently much older. It reads as follows:—* * * * "confess the doctrine of that great man of God—the Lutheran,—and teach the children well in German reading, writing, and reckoning, as well as diligently instruct them in the "Catechismo Lutherii," and the Holy Scriptures as they are in the German Bible. Must sing with the children at school such German spiritual hymns as we used in the services of divine worship in the Fatherland, and as a primary thing of Christianity teach the children all to pray the Triune God in the name of Jesus, so that the pure religion of Jesus Christ may be begun, continued, and maintained to the end of the days. At all times also proving, by conduct and example, a true servant of God, that our tender youth may by the teaching in the school be led to true faith, and be friends of" * * * * *

More than a century elapsed before the adoption of the public school system in this section. In all this time the church schools supplied the stamina of education, and when we contemplate the curricu-

lum of these ancient schools, with the Bible, the Catechism, and the Hymn book in the foreground, we cannot wonder that the schools of those times exercised an influence over all the after years of men and women, and served to build up the great Christian Commonwealth of America on the rock which no antagonisms have shaken. Nor, again, can we resist the temptation to contrast the moulding influences which those schools exerted, with the present day schools of the land, where the Bible is ostracised, prayer not in the curriculum, and the insipid songs, such as "Not for Joseph, if he knows it" and "Way down upon the Swanee Riber" have supplanted the dear old hymns that were breathing prayers of holy inspiration. And then, we wonder!

Among the large number of German emigrants, came also many people of the Reformed Church; and, later, in the 80's, we find provision made for the education of the children of these Reformed families, "in the Evangelical Lutheran School, if the parents will pay the school-master." The school house also served as a place of worship in those early days, and for miles around the settlers could be seen on certain Sundays wending their way, often with rifles on their shoulders, toward the Little Log School House, to hear the schoolmaster read the precious gospel, and, perchance, some printed sermon from a book, while all joined in the inspiring hymns of praise and powerful prayer to the glory of God.

Before the services commenced, and after the same were ended, the stumps and stones that remained around the school-house where nature had planted them, served as rustic seats where young and old could sit and warm themselves. The weather, the crops, new purchases, new clearings, and new comers were discussed by the elders, while the young of both sexes engaged in all the tender exchanges of sentiment and pathos inspired by the occasion. These gatherings, too, exercised an important influence on the community, and often served as a bond of peace and unity, filling memories

with tender recollections and affections that went down to and beyond the grave. Polemical differences scarcely disturbed the relations of the worshipers even of different faith, and the lessons taught mainly breathed a spirit of contentment with their lot; and, none doubt that their earnest supplications to the Father in Heaven were heard as soon beneath the smoke begrimed rafters of that humble school house, and their hymns sounded just as sweet, in the ear of Heaven, as the deep toned anthems and chants that swelled up through the gilded dome of St. Peter's.

Recall, now, that for a thousand years no progress has been made on the face of the earth in science, art, or philosophy, except where Christian thought prevails. Reflect, and discover, if you can, any cause for advancement other than the inspirations of Christianity, which has spurred the human mind to an activity in all directions unknown to the world outside of the circle of the influences of education based on Christian fundamentals, and you will agree that in the great work of building a nation on the foundations of liberty our forefathers and their sons were inspired by the genius of Christianity in these schools. The unbiased historian of America and its civilization will yet have to turn back and recognize what America owes to the lessons learned in the little old log school houses that dotted mountain and vale, in Pennsylvania, in the days when the Germans, beyond the Blue mountains, established their school by the Little Schuylkill.

CHAPTER VI.

PASTOR DANIEL E. SCHAEFFER AND THE FIRST FRIEDENS CHURCH.

IF the adage which says: "A man is what his preference makes him," is true, we may not speculate upon what the character of the men who had so long worshiped at the Old Log Schoolhouse were. Ever, in their poverty, and surrounded by every hardship, they were looking anxiously forward to a time when they might have their regular church and pastor. Lands they had procured, and provided that these should "be unto the Evangelical Lutheran Church[1] and School in Brunswick in the vicinity of the Little Schuylkill unto the last

1. Rev. Dr. Theodore E. Schmauk in a note on "The Early Lutherans in the State" says:—"Pennsylvania was pre-eminently the Province of Lutherans. It was settled first by them. One might term it, in a broad sense, the original territory of the Lutheran church in America, as New York is that of the Reformed church. The Lutherans were here nearly half a century before William Penn, and from them he secured the site on which he built Philadelphia, as afterwards he bought his great interior holdings from the Indians. The Lutheran liturgy was the first praise that went up to God from the shores of this state, and Luther's catechism (intended for the very tribes of Indians that originally owned this ground) was the first book (preceding Eliot's Indian Bible) translated into the Indian language. In 1638 the Lutheran Swedes came. In 1682 the Quaker arrived. In 1683 the German mystics, Lutherans and Dunkards settled in Germantown. In 1694 a German Lutheran preacher became a prominent, if not the chief instrument in establishing the first and principal Episcopal congregation in the State (Old Christ Church), and in offsettng that Quaker supremacy, which, if constitutionally maintained, might have changed the political and religious history of the State." The Lutheran preacher here referred to was Koester and from that time forth great efforts were made to draw the German people into the Established church of England, and to gain, for that church, their property and children, as well as their hearts. A scheme to educate the Germans in English so that they could worship in the English Episcopal church was put on foot in 1755, and carried on for several years, but really with little of the expected good results, because the Germans loved their Lutheran religion; and, though, as Dr. H. E. Jacobs ("Lutheran Movement in England") has shown, the Anglican church was for the most part founded on Lutheran Liturgies, and there was a great similarity in the liturgies, the Germans refused to be drawn into that church; and this may account for their determined provisions for the German Evangelical Lutheran church and schools. It would often seem in the later discussions of the language question in the church, that the spirit of the fathers has descended upon the sons, to make them view with suspicion every attempt to introduce the English language into the pulpits of Lutheran churches.

of the days." (bis auf den Juengsten Tag.)[2] The School they had built and maintained; And now, at last, came among them "Pastor" Daniel E. Schaeffer,[3] to help them in their trials and give them the hope of a future regular pastorate. This was in 1794. We know from a minute made on a paper containing accounts of the cost of "Repairs to the School-house," that Pastor Schaeffer dispensed the Holy Communion to these people (no number is given) at the School House on the 2nd Sunday in Advent 1794, and the general collection, (Almosengeld), amounted to £1-3-1, which was given to "Jacob Bensinger, Trustee."

Research gives color to the statement of fact that Pastor Schaeffer visited the flock here at regular intervals, at least from that time forward; besides visiting other scattered settlers in the valleys to the north and east, particularly in West Penn township. The principal men in this vicinity, who now moved toward the building of a church were Frederick Bensinger, Jacob Leininger,[4] Jacob Whetstein,[5] Jacob Bensinger, John Dornbach,[6] Bernard Kepner, Sr., Bernhard Kepner Jr., Baltzer Bock,[7]

2. This provision seems to have been very common where lands were taken up for Church and School purposes in those days.

3. What were the antecedents of this Pastor Daniel E. Schaeffer, or just when he first came among these people we have not been able to learn. That he was a comparatively young man, a forcible preacher, and an indefatigable worker in his calling seems to be the concensus of tradition. That all the Halle Records and other usual source of such information are silent upon the subject inclines us to think that he was one of the many itinerant preachers, without ordination, who swarmed over the country at that time. Certain, however, it is that he settled in this trans-montain section, and served this congregation and later also Zion's Church of West Penn township from 1807, together with other churches, as far east as Lehighton in Carbon County, for a number of years. His influence was great among these people, but seems, from results, to have been exerted for the welfare of the good estate of the congregation alone. He continued as pastor of Friedens church until the year 1826. Where he went after that, except that he continued to serve Zion's Church, West Penn, until 1835, I have not with my best research and inquiry been able to trace.

4. Of the history of the Leininger family there is little authentic record, except that they came to this section early in the 80's of last century, and settled in "Summer Valley" and West Penn.

5. The Whetstein's came direct from the fatherland in 1761, and settled in the vicinity of Weaver's mill. None of their name now remain in this section.

6. The Dornbach's came over in 1755, but they do not appear in this section until 1760. None of their name now remain here.

7. Balzer Bock, a son of Johannes Bock, was born in Hesse Hanan, Germany. At the age of 9 years he emigrated with his father to America, and landed at Philadelphia, October 23, 1754.

Jacob Shaeffer[8] and Benjamin Kepner. A subscription list was circulated, the heading of which recited that "Whereas the congregation was too poor to undertake the work, they ask all persons to whom this list is presented to grant them some free-will contributions, of materials, labor or money." In the meantime a congregational meeting was held, in October 1796, "for the purpose of revising certain articles in the church ordinances and considering whether we may grant the Reformed people in the community the privilege of holding divine services on this Lutheran Land."* This being done, and permission being granted to the Reformed people to worship here also provisionally, the building project progressed more rapidly. At first it had been decided, to enlarge the old School House and use it for church purposes alone, until some later day when they might be "more able to build a suitable and more substantial building to the housing of the altar of God." Other counsel, however, prevailed, pleading for the retention of the school in a separate building "that the altars of God be not defiled" (das Gottes Altar nicht verunreinigt werde); and, with the counsel of Pastor Schaeffer, it was decided to build a log church on stone foundations at the side of the School-house. The winter and spring of 1796-97 saw the men again in the woods, and the keen axes sang the refrain to the labor of love, as tree crashed down after tree, and the logs were fashioned and hauled for the long desired Temple of the Lord. Others were busy hauling stone for the foundation walls,—and some were hauling and sledding timbers to the saw-mill a few

They first located in Windsor township, Berks county. At the death of the father, probably 1791, Balzer Bock removed to the vicinity of McKeansburg. He had married Sussana Bolich, October 17th, 1780. He was a soldier in the army of Washington. He was a very active church-man, and the direct forefather of the influential Bock family of this section. He donated the first church and school lands at McKeansburg, in 1813, and was instrumental in establishing there the first school in which the English language was taught in this section, Joseph Silvers being the first English teacher. Balzer Bock died, June 17, 1827.

8. The Shaeffer family came into this section about the year 1789, and bought the lands of Andrew Neifer, near the present church, a part of which lands were afterward (1800) sold to the church, some of the descendants are yet members of the congregation.

miles distant,[9] to make into joists, girders, and boards for the building. Blacksmiths were busy making nails, hinges, etc., and the entire community was in the suspense of happy expectation.

Nevertheless, when the fall of 1797 came with its frosts, only the foundation walls had been finished, and the corner stone was laid on the 20th Sunday after Trinity. During the coming winter, therefore, the actual building operations were suspended except that more timbers were cut, hauled, and sawed, and the lumber hauled back again to the church, ready for the carpenter when spring should open.

On the 19th day of March 1798, John Dornbach and Benjamin Kepner, building commissioners, (Baumeister), entered into a formal contract with Andrew Etzler to complete the work for the sum of "Fifty pounds good and lawful money;"** and on the 19th day of Oct. in the same year (1798) the congregation assembled in their new church[10] for the purpose of dedicating it unto the Triune God. The dedicatory service was conducted by Pastor Schaeffer who preached the sermon, (Text not given) to a great concourse of the people, also bearing the greetings of the neighboring Zion's church(in West Penn,) which was in fact a daughter of the Friedens congregation. The church officers at this time were: Deacons:—Frederick Bensinger, and Bernhard Kepner, Jr. Elders:—Baltzer Bock and Bernhard Kepner, Sr. Trustees:—Jacob Wetstein and Jacob Bensinger. Pastor, Daniel E. Schaeffer.

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9. Near Rausch's Station.

10. Mr. George Bolich, now over 83 years of age, resident in Lynn, Lehigh county, informs us that he remembers this old log church well, especially the incident of the burning out of the floor in 1824, when it became ignited from sparks from the old fashioned wood-stoves which were then used to heat the building. The church was built of good and large logs from the foundations up. Was about 20 by 30 feet in size. The roof was made of clapboards or shingles split by hand from timbers. It was plastered with clay and the walls decorated with figures in blue paint. It had no ceiling. There were four windows on each side and a great ledgedoor at the front. At the west end of the room was the altar and pulpit. The pulpit was of the old style, high up with a winding stairway leading from the chancel, and had an ornamental "roof," or sounding board over it. There was a gallery at the end above the entrance. The church was heated by two wood stoves, the stove pipe being stuck out of the windows, as there was no chimney.

The collection lifted on this auspicious occasion amounted to £9.-4-1-4. It may be well to append to this chapter copies of the revised Church ordinance of 1796,[11] and contract agreement for completing the church building, so that they may be preserved, since the originals are growing very old and are much worn from folding.

11. Of the original ordinances, which are here spoken of as being now revised, we can find no trace.

*Of this paper a page is evidently lost, but the translation of the remainder is as follows:—"The beloved Christian congregation, however, increased; and desiring that the beloved, pure Word of God be continued to be preached to them, having now held services for a long time in this school-house and had preaching by the Evangelical Lutheran teachers, so that they might be made perfect in faith in Jesus Christ. Since this school-house is, now, too small, the beloved Evangelical congregation has resolved to enlarge this school-house and to convert it into a regular church, to the building of which they have chosen John Dornbach and Benjamin Kepner; and when it is finished it shall be styled the Evangelical Lutheran Friedens Church. And now also, since the Reformed people desire a place where they can hold divine services until they shall be able to erect a church for themselves, the following revised articles have been adopted by the beloved Evangelical Lutheran Congregation:—

I. Although this church is built upon Evangelical Lutheran ground, which shall remain such so long as sun and moon shall be; yet the Reformed community shall be granted the liberty now to hold divine services, conducted by an upright pastor, so long as they are not themselves able, by God's grace to purchase land and to build a church building for themselves wherein to hold divine services.

II. They shall also be granted the liberty, that whenever they hold services in this Evangelical Lutheran Church, the baptismal and communion vessels shall be at their service; but the offerings, (Almosen), which are lifted at the holding of such divine services on the Reformed side, as often as the same may be held, shall be paid to this Evangelical Lutheran Congregation and be used for the maintenance of the church.

III. Good order shall be mutually observed, so that it is not to be permitted that two preachers conduct divine services on the same forenoon or afternoon; but, it shall always remain so that if it can not be otherwise arranged, then, one shall preach in the forenoon and the other in the afternoon; in order that all may be done in love and harmony unto the glory of the Lord.

IV. It shall not be permitted to either the Lutheran or the Reformed members of the church that two or three persons select a preacher and have him to teach in the church according to their own pleasure; but, at all times the election shall be by the entire congregation and the choice of the majority.

V. In the election of a pastor, school-master, or deacons it shall not be permitted a member of the Reformed congregation to have a vote for Lutheran officers; and vice versa, for the Reformed officers no Lutheran shall have a vote. Each side shall retain its own rights and liberties to hold its own elections; but each side shall exercise diligence that no person or teachers be chosen who may be errorists in doctrine or of questionable moral character.

VI. Although the cemetery or church-yard belongs to the Lutheran land of this church, the members of the Evangelical (church) will concede their Reformed brethren in Christ the liberty to bury their dead in this cemetery, (Fried-hof); and this so long until they, (the Reformed,) shall not be able to have such place for themselves.

VII. If it should, however, happen that in these two congregations two persons die at the same time, then the following order shall be observed, to wit:—the one dying first shall be buried first, and his funeral services in the church shall be held without hindrance.

VIII. The members of the Reformed congregation obligate themselves that so long as they shall bury their dead in this cemetery they will contribute their aid to the maintenance of this cemetery and faithfully observe their obligations as other members of this (Lutheran) congregation do. ,

IX. The church council shall be elected from the members of this Evangelical Lutheran congregation by vote,—so many as they may themselves ordain, but never less than two deacons, two elders, and two trustees; nevertheless the church council shall not have power to carry out matters of moment, but the congregation shall first be in formed, and when a majority of the votes shall have determined, the church-council shall act accordingly.

X. The church council of this Evangelical Lutheran church shall as heretofore, always serve without money compensation, and perform their labors out of love for this congregation. If, however, hereafter, they should be sent far away for a pastor or a schoolmaster, or such like service for the church, then the person or persons so designated thereto or appointed by the congregation shall be entitled to have their reasonable expenditures, as becometh Christians, paid.

XI. The church council of this Evangelical Lutheran church shall so much as in them lies, and is possible, see to it that among us only such preachers and school-masters shall be called or proposed for election of whom they have good testimonials that they are pure in their doctrine and Christian character, and if such serve under them, (the council), they, (those so called), must remain in doctrine and life according to the teaching of the Lord Jesus. And, should such (conduct) not be maintained by these, then, they, (the council), shall inform the congregation by whom these shall be dismissed from their office and station, and others called and elected.[1]

XII. The church council obligates itself and is bound to exercise diligence that in church and school matters all things are done in good and christian order.

XIII. The church council shall also henceforth exercise diligence that the church and school house are maintained in a good and useful manner; and that this Evangelical church and school property and land be neither ruined nor taken from us by such as through subterfuge seek to draw our lands and children to themselves under the pretext of being the Evangelical church in this Western land (Abendland), but be and remain our own heritage and property unto the last day.[2]

XIV. The schoolmaster who desires to reside on the property of this Evangelical Lutheran Church, must recognize and confess the doctrine of that great man of God,—Martin Luther,—as his own, and be able to teach well, in German, reading, writing, and reckoning, (arithmetic). He shall diligently instruct the children in the Lutheran Catechismo, and the Holy Scriptures as they are in the Bible. He shall diligently sing with the children at school such hymns as are used in the public services of worship in the church; and, as a primal matter of christianity, he shall teach the children to pray to The Triune God in the name of Jesus, so that the religion of Jesus may be begun, continued and maintained to the end of the days.

XV. Though this school-house is built on Lutheran ground, yet, the schoolmaster shall, for pay, teach also the children of the Reformed side, to read and so forth; and, if their parents so desire, he shall let these children use their own catechism ; and shall exercise the same diligence and labor at such children as he owes to the congregation itself. In this he shall keep the children on equality before him, that he be not a respecter of person in the school.

XVI. The school-master who is chosen hereafter to serve here must be and also remain a true friend of the Christian religion and morality, so that he may at all times prove himself by his conduct and example a true servant of God and the beloved congregation; and, that our tender youth may be led and brought into true faith, and through his teaching to true Christian lives also; and he may, as a friend of God, in the last day, when King Jesus comes to judge the quick and the dead, be able to say:—Behold, my Lord, here are they whom Thou gavest me for instruction. I brought them all through Thy doctrine and grace to Thee, and it is not my fault if any of these be lost.

And, now, Thou Our Faithful God and Father, have mercy upon all thy Christian people, and especially also upon this congregation. Maintain among them Thy beloved peace and brotherly love. Bless,

Most Gracious Father, Bless Thou them that mean well by Thy church; and, at all times bless the parents. Bless the young with Thy Holy Spirit, that, after their parents' death, they may belong to Thy righteous people; that Thy doctrine and the faith be preserved. Bless this congregation with faithful teachers for young and for old. Yea, Lord Jesus, Thou alone art the Savior of thy dearly purchased church, and above all we commend to Thee this house of God now to be built to Thy glory. Receive it under the shelter of Thy abounding grace. Defend the congregation, that error may never be taught or countenanced in the church or in her 'Throne of Truth.' Give unto them always teachers who seek Thy glory and the congregation's salvation for time and eternity. Oh, let this be realized! Amen! Hallelujah! And let all the earth pray and desire this unto the end of the days! Amen! Amen."

1. Curious as is this document throughout, yet, in these days when we have our colleges, seminary, and ministerium, to educate, train, examine and ordain the ministers of the church, one can not refrain from speculating a little as to what men were permitted to officiate in the pulpits of congregations where church councils of laymen were constituted the board of examiners to report upon the orthodoxy of the ministers. How thankful we can feel to God and the fathers who organized and maintained our ministerium, and, how thankfully may we all contribute our mites unto the furtherance of so great a work!

2. Whether this provision was intended as a warning against the "Muhlenbergiensiens," as the adherents of the Synod or Ministerium were called; or, whether it was an echo of the early attempt of the Anglican church to draw the Germans into their fold we may but conjecture. But, in either case, we here recognize the restless suspicions that had been aroused in the breasts of our German forebears, and the spirit underlying them caused many difficulties and dissatisfactions, bordering on confuson in after years.

**Contract Articles for Building the First Church Building.

"In Brunswick Township, Berks County, on the 19th day of March, 1798, a written accord, (agreement), has been made and concluded, BETWEEN Andrew Etzler, John Dornbach, and Benjamin Kepner, as follows:

First:—Andrew Etzler promises to make and complete all the joiner and carpenter work, and to paint what is necessary at the church which is now being built; and to do all things necessary to make the church-building good and complete in a workmanlike manner, so far as required; while the two building commissioners promise "Mister" Etzler not to let him want for boards, or nails, or his keep, (boarding), whatsoever that might hinder them in their work; and everything they deliver must be of good quality.

Whereupon we, John Dorn, (bach) and Benjamin Kepner promise to pay to Andrew Etzler for the work above mentioned the sum of Fifty pounds good and lawful money. One-half thereof so soon as the work is completed, and the other half within six months thereafter.

We, hereto, therefore, subscribe ourselves in the presence of witnesses."

BERNARD KEPNER, JR	JOHN DORNBACH, (M.S.)
PETER HELM.	BENJAMIN KEPNER, (M.S.)
CHRISTIAN RAUB.	ANDREW ETZLER, (M.S.)

Note.—The final payment of £10 was made July 10th, 1801, to Bernard Kepner, Jr., assignee of claim of Andrew Etzler.

CHAPTER VII.

THE REFORMED CONGREGATION.*

LITTLE authentic data, only tradition, is at hand concerning the early Reformed settlers in this vicinity, except that while among the settlers, crossing the Kittatiny Mountains in the 80's of last century, there were some families of the German Reformed Church and some of the sects, yet for the most part these people came into this vicinity from the direction of the Lizzard Creek Valley, and down the Catawissa Valley.

That they were anxious also to establish places of worship and possess the advantages of schools for their children is evident from the provision made by the Lutheran congregation (1796) to give

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*General Note on the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania.

Though Pennsylvania was pre-eminently a Lutheran strong-hold, many Dutch and Swiss came over and settled along the banks of the Delaware. The Rev. Samuel Guldin, a Swiss Pietist, came to America and landed at Philadelphia, perhaps about 1720. He found in America a wide field for preaching, as there were no Reformed ministers among the Germans, except itinerant vagabonds who had no right to the office they claimed. He gathered the Reformed people wherever he could, in barns, groves, houses—anywhere, as they had yet no churches. He was the forerunner of the Reformed church organization in America, though he had no hand in the organization itself. It was due to him perhaps more than any other one man among the Reformed people, that Count Zinzendorf's effort to form a union denomination among all the Germans, of whatever faith, failed to inveigle the German and Swiss Reformed settlers in Pennsylvania. His home was at Oley, in Eastern Berks county. He died at Philadelphia, Dec. 31, 1745. By strengthening the hands of the scattered Reformed people against the Zinzendorfian fanaticism, he paved the way for the later work of Schlatter to formally organize the Reformed church. When the Rev. Michael Schlatter, (the father of the Reformed church in America, as was Muhlenberg of the Lutheran) came to these shores, landing at Boston July 24, 1746, and coming to Philadelphia Sept. 6, 1746, he brought with him the commission of the Reformed Classis of Amsterdam, Holland, to superintend the organization of the German churches in Pennsylvania, and to organize the congregations he might find, or establish there, into a Coetus (Synod) subject to the Reformed church of Holland, which would support them. The first Coetus was held in Philadelphia, Sept. 29, 1747. (About a month after the first Lutheran Synod in America.) As in the case of the note on the organization of the Lutheran church, (Vid. Chapter III, Note 12, supra.), it were impossible to recount all his great work in a foot note, here, suffice it then to refer the reader, interested in this history, to Harbaugh's "Life and Mission of Michael Schlatter," or Dr. Good's "Early Fathers of the Reformed Church." Mr. Schlatter died at Philadelphia October 31, 1790, and was buried at the place where is now the public park of "Franklin Square."

COMMUNION VESSELS USED BY REFORMED PEOPLE BEFORE 1810.

FLAGON. PLATTEN AND BAPTISMAL LAVER. CHALICE.

them the privilege to worship in the Lutheran church and have their children admitted into the Lutheran schools, until these Reformed people should be able to procure suitable lands and buildings of their own. It is, however, certainly stated that most of these comers in the last decade of the 18th century and the first decade of the present century were of the German Reformed (Zwingilan) church, and the fraternal hospitality which is shown among these people of the early church at this place, lends color to this statement.

It will be noted that as early as 1823, at least, the younger Sassaman families had left the Lutheran fold of their fathers and affiliated with the Reformed church.[1]

Who were the first pastors, if such they had, in those early days, is not shown by any available record.

The first authentic record is made May 6th, 1810, when "The Holy Communion was held in Friedens Church by Pastor Ph. Meyer, when appeared 26 communicants and 19 catechumens." Among the names so recorded in this minute or protocol of catechumens are Henry Dreher,[2] Jacob Ladig, Adam Moyer, Jonathan Jost,[3] Simon Rufe, Henry Faust,[4] Adam Thorn, Eliza Wingert, Susana Gross, Sophia Faust, Georgiana Koenig, Maria Hoffman and Abigail Frantz.

From these early records of communions held by the Reformed people in Frieden's Church it appears

1. The Sassamans were originally Lutherans, but through a disagreement with some of the leaders in the movement of the early 20's to have the Reformed build their own separate church, they left the church of their fathers and joined the Reformed flock.

2. The Dreher family came to this section from Northampton (now Lehigh) county, and were for a number of years prominent members of the Reformed church; but, like the Bolichs, they were swept under in the wave of sectarianism, in the early 40's of this century, and have affiliated there since then. They settled for the most part in the lower valley of the Little Schuylkill, and Drehersville is named for them.

3. The Jost, (now spelled Yost), family came to this vicinity from Montgomery county. They have been staunch adherents of the Reformed faith, and several men of prominence, both at the bar and the pulpit have marked the history of the family with honor.

4. The Faust family came here from Lehigh county and settled in what is called Bachert's valley. They have been prominent in the Reformed congregation both here and at Zion's church in West Brunswick.

that Pastor Phillip Meyer[5] served them regularly until 1829, when the following record is minuted. "Communicants at the Spring Communion, 1829, Pastor Ph. Moyer, 37; Catechumens confirmed: male 3; female 6." He was succeeded by Rev. John Zulich[6] (now written Zulick.)

It is known that Pastor Zulich continued in the pastorate of the Reformed congregation until his demise, (1875), when the present Reformed pastor, Rev. Henry Leisse,[7] was called to the pastorate.

The congenial relations between the Lutheran and Reformed people continued, so that, in 1826, when the matter of building a new, larger church building was agitated, the Reformed people petitioned the Lutherans to have their church privileges extended, and this was accordingly granted and a union church ordinance adopted March 18th, 1827.[8]

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5. We have been unable to learn the antecedents of this pastor. After 1820 his name is written Meyer. He lived for a long time near Drehersville and later purchased several plantations in that vicinity, among which was the farm now owned by Daniel Walborn. He served the Reformed congregations at this place at Zion's in West Brunswick, Friedensburg, and Summer Mountain.

6. This venerable Father in Israel deserves more detailed mention than a note here will allow. He came from Switzerland, in the Canton of Berne, and settled in Upper Northampton, (now Lehigh county), in the vicinity of Stinesville. From this home he served numerous Reformed congregations in Lehigh, Berks, and Schuylkill counties. He rode to his congregations on horseback, and many are the stories related of both pastor and horse. During the 46 years of his active pastorate, he experienced many hardships and rode many thousand miles over mountain and dale, in season and out of season.

He was much beloved of his people, and died at a ripe old age. Looking back as the sun of his activity was setting beyond the hills, and illumined with only cold, retreating rays the valley shadows that closed about him, he could well exclaim, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace!" He died in the early part of the year 1875. Among his descendants are the Zulick family of Orwigsburg, Pa.

7. Vid. Biographical sketch chapter XIII.

8. We append here a translation of the historical preamble of this document, which will serve also to explain much of the later history of Friedens Union church.

"Church Ordinance of the Union Lutheran and Reformed Friedens Church in Brunswick Township, Schuylkill County, Pa.

In the Name of the Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, Amen!

"Since, in the year of our Lord, 1796, the inhabitants of Brunswick Township, Schuylkill county, in the vicinity of the Little Schuylkill, have established a church ordinance or constitution of the Lutheran congregation of the so called Friedens church, wherein there were granted unto the Reformed congregation, certain therein set forth rights, which they have maintained until this time; but, now, the Reformed desire to have an equal right granted them to all that belongs to this church. Therefore, the said Lutheran congregation caused a congregational meeting to be called, through previous an-

In the spring of 1839—when the last record was made, there were 29 communicants present. The congregation has however steadily grown in numbers, and now counts over a hundred communicant persons.

History has shown that the Union church of Eastern Pennsylvania has proved detrimental to the healthy progress of either of the parties to the union; and, though it is acknowledged that each side would find it to its great advantage to have its separate churches today, yet, it is gratifying to record the fact, that the Union in the Church by the Little Schuylkill has indeed not belied the name FRIEDENS CHURCH.

She has seen her days of many trials, but has always again resumed the paths of peace when the storm clouds passed away.

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nouncement, duly made to vote upon the question whether such equal rights should be granted to the Reformed; and, whereas, at said election, it was resolved to grant such equal rights to the Reformed congregation, the following members were elected to formulate a new church ordinance or constitution, to wit:—Of the Lutherans, William Bock, and Franz E. Kuehnle, and of the Reformed, Frederick Sassaman and Jacob DeLong, who, on this 10th day of November, 1826, have formulated the following articles, which shall hence stand as the Constitution and Church Ordinances."

Hereupon follow 24 articles of Constitution and By-Laws, which exist in print, and copies of which are yet extant, so that we need not reprint them here, curious as they are. Yet it is interesting for information to learn who the signers were, and we append their names, as follows:

Andrew Bolich, William Bock, Lutheran Elders.
John Steigerwalt, Christopher Beyer, Sr., Lutheran Deacons.
Franz E. Kuehnle, Henry Beyer, Lutheran Trustees.
Frederick Sassaman, Jacob DeLong, Reformed Elders.
Daniel Hoffman, John Paul, Reformed Deacons.
Henry Riegel, Reformed Trustee.
This Constitution was adopted March 18, 1827.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHURCH LANDS AND CEMETERY.

HAVING already noted how the fathers made serious provision that the lands secured for church and school purposes should remain such as long as sun and moon do wax and wane, it will now be time to see how readable can be made a chapter full of such legal verbiage, as even the law student instinctively seeks to escape, by throwing the "onus" upon some less witty fellow student to make out a "Brief of Title."

On the 14th day of September in the year of Our Lord 1751, under warrant of the State Department of Public Lands, there was surveyed and granted in fee, unto a certain Benjamin Lightfoot, then and there being, a tract of land containing 175 acres, 69 1-2 perches, lying and being along the Little Schuylkill on the west side thereof, about twelve miles toward the headwaters of said Little Schuylkill river from its confluence with the River Schuylkill, and beyond the Kittatiny mountains.

"In consideration of the sum of one pound, eight shillings, specie of the realm, paid on behalf of the Lutheran German people in the vicinity of the Little Schuylkill, in Berks County, by the aforesaid Bensinger and Kuehnle" the said Benjamin Lightfoot, being so thereof possessed in his demesne as of fee, did on the 6th day of April, 1753, sell, and convey by good and sufficient assurances in law, a certain tract, piece, or parcel, of the lands aforesaid, unto Frederick Bensinger and John Kuehnle, in trust, to wit:—one acre and forty-six perches, to have and to hold the same unto them and their successors, so long as sun and moon shall exist, for the purpose of erecting and maintaining thereon a Lutheran church and school in behalf of said Lutheran people" .

CHURCH AND CHURCH LANDS.

We have heretofore[1] seen how, in 1768, the deacon, Jacob Bensinger, was empowered by these people to "take up" more land, contiguous to this land for the same purpose; but, find no record of his having accomplished the mission for which he was thus delegated.

On April 1st, 1791, a land warrant issued from the State Department of Public Lands to the Surveyor, to survey and grant unto "Jacob Whetstein and Jacob Bensinger, Trustees of the Lutheran Church and School, in Brunswick Township, County of Berks, and State of Pennsylvania, near the Little Schuylkill," and contiguous to lands now (then) owned by said Lutheran Church and School, under title from Benjamin Lightfoot, a piece or parcel of land containing twenty-six acres and forty perches, and allowances.

May 3, 1802, Jacob Schaeffer being so in his demesne seized as of fee, did by his sufficient deed and assurance, in writing made, sell, grant, and convey "unto Frederick Bensinger and Bernhard Kepner, Jr., Trustees for the Protestant Congregation in the township of Brunswick, County of Berks, and State of Pennsylvania, and their successors forever, as joint tenants in trust for the German Lutheran Congregation," "in consideration of the sum of Ten pounds in gold and silver money" certain pieces or parcels of land, adjoining other lands of the said German Lutheran Congregation, and containing together one acre, and one hundred and forty-five perches.

On May 10, 1853, William Knittle and wife Louisa Ann, by their deed, sold and conveyed unto Henry Sassaman, Daniel B. Kerschner, and William Boek, Elders, and George Teter, William Dreisbach, and Jacob Schaeffer, church wardens, of the Friedens Church in the township of East Brunswick, Schuylkill County, Pa., a tract or parcel of land adjoining other lands of said Friedens church, and containing fifty-six perches, strict measure, in consideration of

1. Vid. Chap. IV.

the sum of seven dollars and thirty cents, the receipt whereof is acknowledged.

By such, and sundry conveyances, therefore, Friedens Church is now in possession of 29 acres and 127 perches of land, which, less the cemetery, and the yard on which the church now stands, (about 3 1-2 acres), is mostly under tillage by the janitor of the church, who resides upon said land.

Besides the church building, and proper shedding for tying horses of members coming to worship, there is on the land a good two-story, weather boarded house for the janitor, (once intended for the parsonage), together with a large barn and other outbuildings.

The cemetery adjoins the church building on the west, being separated from it by an open space about fifteen yards wide. It lies at the heavy slope of the hill, and, except in the corner towards the church building, it is so steep that it is hard to reach graves with a corpse in winter time. Coming down the highway, however, from McKeansburg to the church, or approaching it from the direction of New Ringgold in the spring time, when the trailing wild flowers cover it like a deep pink carpet, laid in oblong blocks, dotted with white tombstones rising tier upon tier, around which memories fondly, often tearfully linger, and with here and there a spot of vernal green, there can be no sweeter, lovelier, or dearer sight than this bivouac of the dead. Set thus, with the rolling wooded hills falling away in the distance behind it until they meet the azure horizon, and the church itself at its base, to the right, it is a veritable place of "calm and undisturbed repose" to the vision as well as in fact.

And what a sermon that vision is, none do rightly appreciate until they stand at this point of vision in the highway and point out to their own hearts the spot in that fragrant hillside where lie the mortal remains of some beloved and dear one. Then it is that we seem to stand in the highway of life to behold nature's picture of the place of the soul's rest on earth—the church—at the base; and above it, as

between earth below and sloping up to the blue heavens above, the flower covered, and memory-fascinating place of the body's rest from earth's trials, when the Master calls us home at the eventide to our reward.

Although, in the earlier years there were, according to the custom of those days, several private burial plots, each fenced off in some corner of the pioneer's plantation, where he could lay his beloved dead near his cabin door, and watch over them as he sat in reveries of the past, weary with the day's labor at evening time, these have now, with one or two exceptions, fallen into decay; and, the descendants of these fathers having moved to other scenes, the plowshare has long since leveled the mounds that marked the place that was once wet with filial tears or covered with the roses of love's entwining memory; or, else, the thorn, the weed, and briar have long overgrown the neglected graves, and the little brown sand stone, or reddish shale-slate once placed there by loving hands, now mournfully peeps out of its rank surroundings, as if pleading to be remembered, by the traveler who may be passing down that way.

But from the early days, (1757 at least), there has been a piece of this "school and church land" set apart for the burial of the dead of the church community. It has been well kept and additions made thereto from time to time until the once little plot "in the corner by the school house" has become at this time a cemetery enclosing three acres of ground or more; and, with the exception of the new piece of about 3-4 of an acre, added in 1890, it is now thickly dotted with marble tombstones and granite monuments to the memory of the many dead buried there. From all directions, near and far, the silent funeral corteges have come to this spot, the relatives of the dead tenderly placing once more the now encoffined body of the former worshiper, in the vestibule of the building, to rest a moment in the place where the feet of the one now dead did

often approach the altars of the living God, while they go up to that same altar to hear the word

"Fear not, I am with thee,"

and offer their prayers and thanksgivings before they go out again, to take their precious burden to the grave.

Many are the worshipers who, with each recurring Sabbath, linger a moment, before the services in the church commence, amidst the tombstones around which love's memory will cling while life here lasts.[2]

2. It was this clinging sentiment which in 1875, when the present church building was built, prevented the location of the church from being changed to the Borough of New Ringgold, where, for the welfare of the congregation, it ought to be. Many then already recognized that the church was away from the centre of densest population,—being now at the extreme western end of the community of its members, many having as far as 4 miles to come from the eastward, while to the westward live but 4 or 5 families affiliating here; but, in spite of the plea that the church should be moved to New Ringgold for its own welfare, only about 5-8 of a mile away, the stronger plea on behalf of the sentiment, ever sacred indeed, that here our fathers came to worship, and here are their ashes buried, prevailed; and here again was the church built.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CHURCH SCHOOL OF THE PRESENT CENTURY AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

AFTER the decision, in 1796, not to enlarge the School House for church purposes, but to build a new church at the side of the school house, no movement was made either to disturb or to improve the school house, until two years later, after the church had been dedicated, when we find a petition circulated, stating that since the school house had grown old and in need of much repairs, and since much of the lumber left from the building of the church could be utilized to this end, the members were invited to come and contribute their labor to effecting the needed repairs. This was evidently done, and the school continued. The pastor visited the school at stated intervals to examine the Lutheran children in their catechism. The school grew rapidly at this time in number of pupils, and when the second church was built to replace the old church which had become too small for the congregation (1828,) the advocates of a new school building gained their point, and we find a petition circulated in the month of December, 1828, reciting among other things, that it was equally necessary to build also a new and larger school house to replace the totally inadequate and rickety school house at said church, that our youth may continue to be taught the precious religion of Jesus and other branches of useful knowledge thoroughly, and, that since, much building material was left from the building of the new church, besides much of the material of the old church was available, that were the proper time to do the work.

As an indication of the spirit in favor of the welfare of the school it may be proper to state that

though the congregation had just contributed liberally to build the new church, Mr. William Bock headed this list with a subscription of $10.00. Then follow 53 names of subscribers to the fund, some subscribing $10.00 and others less, and some contributing materials and labor besides their cash subscriptions, so that the school house was soon built, (1829) and accommodations found for the increased demand for school room, as well as additional rooms for the residence of the schoolmaster and his family. It was built of logs, two stories high, and to the rear of the site of the old school house. This is the house which in 1876, after the building of the third church, was remodeled, weatherboarded, and put in condition for a parsonage, and is now occupied by the janitor and his family.

Thus the church school at Friedens church continued until it was supplanted by the modern Public School. The schoolmaster in the latter years of its existence served also as organist to the congregation, farmer, and janitor.

When, in 1835, attempts were first made to introduce the State system of public schools they met with great disfavor,[1] and it was largely due to Will-

1. We have no purpose to appear as apologists for the Pennsylvania German; but, when historians, or such as profess to write his history in the declining years of this century, assert with ill concealed pleasure that it was due to the dull taciturnity of these phlegmatic and slow people, we protest that such writers have at the time either forgotten, or were inexcusably ignorant of the previous attempts made for upward of a century to draw them and their possessions away, or gain their children into fanatical movements harmful both to the soul, and to the State. When we speak of the Pennsylvania German in this relation it is well to remember a few of the historical facts which tended to make him wary of every attempt to deprive him of his school and church. Let us enumerate a few of these facts.

(a). These were a people coming from the very birthplace of public education, who came here imbued with the spirit of Luther,—Educate the masses.

(b). They were the pioneers in school work as well as frontier advancement.

(c). Those who came here by way of the Schoharie Valley of New York learned there for the first time that men must put locks at their gates, as there were rogues in America whose real profession was neither piety nor schools for the people; and, when, under pretext of legal right, they were cheated out of their lands and the fruit of their hard pioneer labors, and forced to either emigrate or be slaves to scoundrelism in high places, they came to Penn's wilderness to push the school and the church beyond the frontier boundaries, and the memory of their wrongs came with them.

iam Audenried, Esq., then a resident at McKeansburg, and a member of the State Senate, where he, in 1827, offered the bill entitled "An act to provide a fund in support of a general system of Education

(d). Those who came by way of Philadelphia, mostly paid their passage money by a servitude of from 3 to 7 years under unscrupulous task-masters who lived by speculative traffic in human beings; and when their children were also taken from them to be sold under pretext of a legal right,—these guileless people not without their faults submitted, though they keenly felt that while they were equals if not mental and spiritual superiors to their quondam masters, they were looked down upon as social ciphers, as never was the negro of the southland more, and thus they were left to go forth to the Kittatiny frontiers with all these memories, of first experiences among men who also professed piety and a love for the precepts of Jesus, but whom fortune had set in high places.

(e). Then remember the attempts (1745) to establish schools to educate these "German cattle" in English, which were hailed with delight by them until they saw the wolf's fangs under the guise of the sheep, trying to devour their religious consciences and make them political tools under the name of the "Established church."

(f). Coming on the heels of all this, add to the sum of these iniquitous attempts, the Zinzendorfian fanaticism, under the pretext of authority as "Lutheran Superintendent of Pennsylvania."

(g). Then make a further plus mark to your addition, and supply the quantity of the vagabond preacher (self-styled) who found these people's sincere anxiety for the Word of Truth an open door to sneak into their confidences; and, when this class of men found their livelihood threatened by the organization of the Lutheran Synod or Ministerium of Pennsylvania, under Muhlenberg, or the Reformed Coetus, under Schlatter, who would soon call their pretensions to account, they, by the brute instinct of self-preservation, (the only instinct exhibited by them), began to poison the minds of the people whose confidence they abused, until these simply pious people were again deceived, and opposed even their own church when at last she came to them and not only so; but these vagabonds assiduously instilled the poison that militated against everything that threatened their own living, even against the instruments of material progress.

(h). Finally add to the sum total, the hundred and one other things historical, that these people suffered at the hands of men who feared neither God nor the King, and took no interest in "the German" but to rob him of his goods and possessions, and to look down upon him as a social non-entity, when these people themselves were not quite stone blind, but only meekly bearing the cross,—yea, such thngs as even the tyra of an historian can easily know:

Yes, when you forget, or are ignorant of this succession of facts which were the only school that America then provided to these people, anxious for schools and educational advantages, and so having learend their lesson well, to be at least reluctantly suspicious of those who so treated them, then you may call them dull, stupid, ignorant, and obstinate; but your epithets only poorly veil a pen lacking in power, and a heart that might profit by leaving at the feet of some of the old school-masters in the little church school, where were taught at least the first lessons in the principles of charity and justice as laid down in the Sermon on the Mount. And when these men had suffered and sacrificed to establish and maintain their schools for the inculcation of these lessons in their children, they might well be forgiven a suspicion of your quality of justice, if, when you at first proposed to them to supplant their schools by a general state system of Public Schools, you abuse them because they want to know what assurance they may have that these "new-fangled" schools will teach their sons and daughters also the tenets of the faith that is salutary to the soul's eternal welfare, more than all the wisdom of men. Nay! Nay! my historical friend; you have undertaken a mission of humanity when you attempt to write history; do not, therefore attempt the diaphanous trick of hiding mediocrity of talent and preparation for your work, under the lash of invective.

in Pennsylvania";—therefore the real father of the public school bill in Pennsylvania,—that it was adopted there at that time.[2]

Since the adoption of the Public School system in the State, no district has more loyally supported these schools; and the church school at Friedens Church, though it continued open for school purposes, especially catechetical instruction and the teaching of church hymns to the children, until 1848, has become merged in the Sunday School and the Cathetical Lecture Courses by the respective pastors of the church, which are now held regularly in the spacious basement room of the present church.

With the later political tampering with the public schools, to eliminate every remaining vistage of biblical instruction, there has commenced a feeling that the parochial school should be revived here also; and the sentiment is growing among our people, when they view the superior work done at other parochial schools, that it may not be long, ere such revival is undertaken, not because they are the less loyal to the State; but, because they love their children, and are interested in the welfare of their souls as well as their bodies.

2. It is told that the meeting to form the first independent common school district in this section was held at McKeansburg. This attempt failed; but at the annual election, a ticket of "directors" was submitted. The prevailing idea that the system of pay schools or church schools of the period were the "common schools," and the new system, which they called "free schools" was a different thing, led the anti-school men to be confounded by the words "common" and "free." The pro-school men carried their point at this election by taking advantage of this confusion of terms in the mind of one of the anti-school leaders, and procured him to write all ballots to be voted by his partisans, and to put thereon the words "For the Common School." Thus, this man, undesignedly, secured the introduction of the public school system here in 1835, with only one dissenting vote in the district.

CHAPTER X.

DAYS OF PROGRESS,—DAYS OF TRIAL.

THE incidents in the history of the church, after the first church building was dedicated reflect much of the results of formative influences which exerted themselves in the struggle for political, social and religious supremacy in the state and left their impress, accordingly, upon the people of the Little Schuylkill Valley also. After the settlement of Pastor Daniel E. Schaeffer, these people felt that a great victory for their cause in American citizenship had been won. New energies were developed and directed into progressive channels. About 1810 came the first Reformed pastor, Philip Moyer, (afterwards written Meyer). The two congregations fraternized more and more, and services were conducted alternately by the Lutheran and the Reformed pastors, at intervals of two weeks. Things thus progressed in peace, which no unusual religious event seemed to mar.

In 1824, the floor in the church became ignited presumably from the heat of the wood stoves used to heat the building, and until the fire was quenched, and while the new floor was being put in, it was found that the church building had suffered considerable damage. Added to this came also upon them the necessity of enlarging the building to accommodate the ever increasing number of worshipers. These agitations caused various meetings to be held to consider the feasibility of building a new church, or enlarging and remodeling the old church. Interjected here came also the question that, since something must be done, whether, since this was Lutheran property, it should not first be decided to have the Reformed people vacate, as they were now able to purchase land and build their own church; then this church would be large enough,

with needed repairs, to accommodate the Lutheran congregation for some years longer. In the numerous discussions of these matters, some feeling exhibited itself between the pastors, which resulted in the resignation of Pastor Schaeffer, who was succeeded by Pastor Charles G. Strein,[1] who administered the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to the Lutheran congregation for the first time in Spring of 1825, (April 4th) when 74 communicants partook of the sacrament and 15 catechumens were confirmed. After Pastor Schaeffer had gone, the petition of the Reformed people was presented, to be granted equal rights with the Lutherans. Pastor Strein seems to have taken a conciliatory course in the premises, and the articles to form a union congregation were ordered to be drawn up and presented —(1826). But the entire question had introduced a party spirit in the Lutheran flock, and late in 1826 already, Pastor Strein vacated the pastorate of the congregation. In March 1827, the union articles were adopted, and Pastor C. Ph. Muller[2] was called and accepted the pastorate.

It was now decided to tear down the old log church, and build a new church in its place. A petition, or subscription list for this purpose was circulated in June 1827, reciting among other things, that the "united congregations have only very small store of money, therefore find themselves necessitated to accomplish the building of a new union church through free-will offerings," but among the names of subscribers (56 in number) we miss the once familiar names of the Kepners, the Bocks, (except William and Emanuel Bock), the

1. It is unfortunate from a historical stand-point, that we have not been able to gather any authentic data concerning the antecedents and biographies of these early pastors who served the congregation. Of Pastor Strein we know so very little, whence he came or whither he went, that we have to be satisfied to record the fact, that like most of the early pastors here, he was not in affiliation with the ministerium, and because of the want of such regularly prepared and ordained ministers of the church, the congregation suffered many vicissitudes that could have been avoided.

2. This was evidently another of the number of independent preachers of those days. Tradition says, he came here directly from Germany, and was recommended to the congregation by letters from the fatherland. He resided for a time at Hamburg, Berks County. He after removed to Milton, Pa.

Steigerwalts and others. William Bock was treasurer of the Building Committee for the new church.

The unfortunate strife over the question of a Union Church and the alienation of the property, which was to have been and remained unto the Lutheran Church and School "so long as sun and moon exist," brought about an estrangement among these people; and, added thereto, came the agitation that, whereas McKeansburg was a prosperous village in the centre of the population of the district, the new church should be built there instead of on the site of the Old Friedens Church. These matters, together, but more especially the rejection of the latter proposition by the congregation, caused some of the members, both Lutheran and Reformed, to withdraw and build for themselves a new church, (1828) on lands donated by Balzer Bock for the purpose, in the village of McKeansburg.

The people at Friedens Church also proceeded to build their new Union church, and Pastors Muller, (Lutheran) and Meyer (Reformed) continued to serve them. This second Friedens Church was dedicated in October 1828.[3]

3. This church replaced the first building. It was about 40 by 45 feet in size, and built of "logs and timbers," (weatherboarded later). It had a gallery around three walls of the building. The seats which were to have been a great improvement on the backless benches of the first church, were narrow and high, with straight high backs, and, under the hour-and-a-half to two-hour long sermons of the earlier days, these narrow seats might well remind one of some of the physical torturing devices of the inquisition. The pulpit was at the side, and high up. Everything seems to have been crowded together as much as possible. The curious old custom of having separate sections of the church to be occupied, one by the old men, another by younger married men, (this on the gallery). Another for the boys and unmarried men, (on the opposite gallery.) Another for old ladies, (usually also for mourners on funeral occasions.) Another for the younger married women, and still another for spinsters and young girls, prevailed in this church also. The deacons collected the alms in the then usual "Klingelbeutel," and many a drowsy worsnipper, who had prevented his falling over during the sermon by propping himself firmly in the narrow high backed pew, was startled to mundane consciousness with a start at the sound of the little bell attached to the deacon's klingelbeutel. (This was a neat, usually black collection bag, having a little bell attached to it, and itself in turn attached to a long pole). When later an organ was secured (a pipe organ in 1835) for the church, it was built on the gallery facing the pulpit, and "zum singe gehen die board-kerch nuff, par buva und par maid." This gallery was then set apart as a choir gallery and organ loft. This church was replaced by the present church edifice in 1875.

CHAPTER XI.

THE UNION FRIEDENS CHURCH—DAYS OF MANY PASTORS.

THE financial inability of the people of Friedens Union Church to properly support two pastors without help, has from the begining made them dependent somewhat upon the will and whims of other congregations to whose pastors they had to look for services, and we all understand how in those early years of this century and even now yet in many cases, where it is no longer necessary on account of the poverty of the people, the parishes served by individual pastors are so large and extended that it is physically impossible for the pastors to do the work which their calling requires.

After the agitations noted in the preceding chapter, matters again assumed a prosperous appearance, until Pastor Muller, who had come in contact with some pastors of Synod, began to preach tirades against the Lutheran church as represented by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. Little love as the people themselves had been taught for the Muhlenbergian Synod, they could not brook such actions on the part of their pastor, and when their admonitions availed not, they dismissed him from the pastorate in 1831.

During the vacancy, Rev. Fry of the McKeansburg church served them provisionally.

Though to this time the Lutheran congregation had always been served by independent pastors, the congregation was anxious to have a pastor "from the Synod," and it was at this time that they sent a petition to Synod representing their desire.[1]

1. Pastor Muller's tirades seem to have been an "ill wind blowing good" for the congregation. A copy of this petition remains among some old papers here, and represents the condition of the congregation, and its anxiety to have the ministerium send or recommend to them a pastor, except only Pastor Walp(?) who preached in the

It seems that Synod had no available pastor at the time who could serve these people separately from their affiliated congregations, except a Pastor Walp (or Walz) in the vicinity of Hamburg who by his former activity in exposing Pastor Muller to ridicule was, at the time, persona non grata to the congregation. In the meantime George F. Steahlin,[2] a self-styled Lutheran preacher, from Germany came and settled at Orwigsburg. In 1833 he started to preach for some of the congregations whose pastorates were vacant in lower Schuylkill County. He offered his services to the Lutherans of Friedens Church also and was accepted. He continued to serve them until January, 1835, when he too mysteriously vanishes from the scene, leaving many to mourn their misplaced confidence. Matters again looked bad for this flock until Reverend Mark Harpel[3] was elected to the pastorate in 1837. He continued to serve them until 1841. In August 1840, Rev. Dr. Augustus T. Geissenhainer,[4] then a young man, came to the pastorate at Orwigsburg, and in

vicinity of Hamburg, Pa., because of his activity against Pastor Muller, he might not find that general cordiality among some of the members which is due a pastor.

2. Geo. F. Steahlin was born in Manheim, Baden, in 1810. He was a graduate of the University of Heidelberg, (a classmate of Bismarck). He came to the United States in 1830. Located at Orwigsburg. His polished manners and good address opened the hearts of many to him as well as the doors of their homes. He left Orwigsburg in 1833; but of his subsequent career we are ignorant.

3. Rev. M. Harpel came from Montgomery county, Pa., and had been one of the memorable class of students of the Rev. F. W. Geissenhainer D.D., among whom were the venerable J. G. Roeller, Jacob Miller, Fred Waage, J. C. G. Schweitzerbarth, C. F. Welden, and others. He was the first clerical member of the ministerium to officiate at this congregation, we might with equal assurance say the first one in present Orwigsburg parish, to which Friedens church belongs. The petition of this congregation to Synod, though not immediately fruitful, opened the gate to the introduction of regular and responsible ministers to these people, who had so long chafed under the yoke of the "independent preacher." We regret that we had no means at hand for a biographical sketch of this pastor.

4. Rev. Augustus Theodosius Geissenhainer, D.D., was born on the farm of his father in Whitpan Township, Montgomery county, Pa., July 11th, 1814, a son of the Rev. Henry A. Geissenhainer, and Anna Maria (nee Schaerer). In the fall of 1823 he went to live with his uncle Frederick in New York. Here he studied for the ministry, and was licensed to preach by the New York ministerium, Sept. 15, 1835, when only 21 years of age. He was assistant pastor to his uncle until 1838, when he accepted a call to Wurtemburg, N. Y., and served that congregation until called to the Orwigsburg parish in 1840. He united with the ministerium of Pennsylvania in 1841. He came to Orwigsburg bringing his bride, Amelia S. Havemeyer. He afterwards served congregations at Oley, Friedensburg, and Womelsdorf in Berks county. He founded the congregation at Norristown. In 1852 he settled at Trenton, N. J., where he gathered

1841 accepted the call of Friedens congregation, as also that of the McKeansburg church. Rev. Geissenhainer began again to bring order out of the tangled affairs of this congregation and made them feel the advantage of having a regularly ordained and responsible minister. He was uncompromisingly opposed to union churches however, and left for a new field of labors, removing to Reading, Pa., in 1844, followed by the tears and prayers of many of his flock here.

On January 14th, 1845, came Rev. Nathan Yeager,[5] and added to his already large parish of Friedensburg, Zion's church, and Summer Mountain, also the churches at Orwigsburg, Little Schuylkill (Friedens), McKeansburg, and Lewistown. During his pastorate, and in spite of his earnest labors the historical "new measures"[6] began to be agitated in this section, and finally swamped many people under the wave of sectarianism. He continued faithfully to serve his congregations until January 1st, 1852.

At this time the Berks-Schuylkill Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium proposed a division of the charge, and the congregation at Friedens Church sent a delegate to the meeting of conference at Womelsdorf, (Berks County) to protest against the division at that time, on account of the poverty of the people, and the inroads which the "new measures" were making among them, asking also to have a competent minister sent to them.

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the Lutherans and commenced the erection of a new church, and afterward accepted a call to St. Paul's, Allentown, Pa., 1857 to 1858, but returned to Trenton. His busy career took him later to Bethlehem, Pa., Germantown and Hainsport, N. J., where the declining years of his labor were spent; and died March 3, 1882. (Vid. B. M. Schmucker's Biographical sketch of Dr. A. T. G.)

5. Rev. Nathan Yeager came to Orwigsburg from Montgomery county, Pa. He was a son-in-law of Rev. Henry S. Miller of the Trappe charge. The illness of his wife caused him to remove to Norristown, where Mrs. Miller died October 11, 1852. He now went to Easton, Pa., where he again married, (1854) and later retired from the active work of the ministry. He was thrown from his carriage by a runaway horse, and died in 1864.

6. This refers to an attempt at denying the fundamental doctrines of the church, and substituting therefor a rank sectarianism. Among the people in general it is better recognized as the time when some Lutheran preachers introduced sectarian revival services and "the bench" into the Lutheran church.

In the meantime Rev. Yeager, recommneded to the people of his former charge the Rev. Geo. W. Scheide, (unaffiliated). This gentleman visited the congregations and served them, taking up his residence at Orwigsburg. His eccentricities, however, which afterward developed into a fanatical sectarian mania, caused the congregations to dismiss him in 1854.[7]

There was now a vacancy in the pastorate of the Lutheran Congregation for some time; but various candidates, (all independent preachers), presented themselves. In 1855, the congregation elected Pastor August Heilig, who was followed in 1860 by Rev. Theodore Ruetter. The congregation was, however, trying to have a regular pastor, connected with the Synod of their church; and having gained the consent of the Rev. William Hoppe[8] of the Orwigsburg congregation they elected him to the pastorate in November 1861. Rev. Hoppe accepted and succeeded in forming a recognized parish of the Lutheran church, with the congregations at Orwigsburg, McKeansburg, and Little Schuylkill as its members. During the vacancy previous to Pastor Hoppe's acceptance the pulpit had been temporarily supplied by Pastors Woerner,[9] Loehenberger,[10] and Beyer.[11] Pastor Hoppe having received

7. Geo. W. Scheide, came from Berks county, Pa. Soon after his entry upon the pastorate here, he began to take up with the "new measure" ideas and fanaticisms. After his dismissal from the pastorate, his "new measure" advocacy grew to be a mania. Many are the stories told of his gathering the people in barns, in groves,—anywhere in fact; and with wild gesticulations and invective hurl at them the thunderbolts of his eloquence (?). Withal he had his followers for some years, thereafter.

8. Pastor Hoppe, came to Orwigsburg from Williamsport, Pa.

9. Rev. G. F. Woerner, died at Honesdale, Pa., April 22, 1884, aged 56 years, 11 month, 5 days. He had been pastor at Zion's church in West Brunswick at the time he supplied the pulpit here.

10. Rev. J. Loehenberger died at Golden Ring, Md., Sept. 7, 1886, aged 64 years, 8 month, 1 day. He had been pastor at McKeansburg when he supplied the pulpit here.

11. Rev. J. F. Beyer supplied the pulpit often during vacancies here. He was born in Wurtemburg, Germany, Dec. 20, 1826. He came to this country in 1852, and went as teacher and organist to Orwigsburg, Pa. Here he studied for the ministry and was ordained at Pottsville, Pa., in 1856. His first charge was Middleport, Pa. In 1861 he was elected as pastor at Tamaqua where he served 22 years. After serving the Mahanoy, Pa., charge until physically disabled for service, he removed to Philadelphia where he died at the age of 60 years, 2 month, 16 days, on March 16, 1887, leaving a wife, four sons and a daughter. (See Stall's Year Book 1888.)

call to another field of labors left the congregation's pulpit vacant again after Aug. 1863. Rev. F. C. H. Lampe[12] presented himself for election, but the congregation for some reason not now known held no election, and for want of a regular pastor the pulpit was opened to him, and he preached to these people until 1866. After his call to Williamsport, Pa., Jacob F. Wicklein,[13] a public school teacher of some ability, took charge of the Orwigsburg parish as pastor.

Friedens Church being accredited to this parish, was under necessity to yield to this invasion also, and though much confusion arose concerning the irregularities in the pastorate which had made the history of this congregation unique in the history of Lutheran congregations in America, a small majority of the congregation clung to the arrangement with Mr. Wicklein and permitted him to administer the communion in the church. This confusion continued until, in 1871, at the petition of the large minorities in this congregation and the Orwigsburg congregation the Conference sent the Rev. D. K. Kepner[14] to rescue the congregations and supply them.

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12. Rev. Ferdinand C. H. Lampe, was born in Bremen, Germany, Nov. 24, 1830. After teaching in this country at Allentown, Pa., he entered Pennsylvania college at Gettysburg in 1852, and 7 years later was licensed to preach. First pastorate at Pottsville, Pa. (2) Williamsport, Pa. (3) Reading, Pa. (4) Wheeling, W. Va. (5) Warren, Pa. (6) Williamsport, Pa. Published numerous translations, poems, and prose artices. Married Emma Kuehnle of Harrisburg, Pa., in 1857, and his second wife, Kate Buegler, of Erie, Pa., in 1876. Died at Williamsport, Pa., 1884.

13. Jacob F. Wicklein came to McKeansburg as a teacher in the public schools. He was a student at Gettysburg college at the time the Rev. H. E. Jacobs D.D., (now Dean of the Faculty at the Theological Seminary, at Mt. Airy,) was a student. When Pastor Ehrhart left Orwigsburg pulpit vacant, the Lutheran pulpits at McKeansburg and Friedens church were also vacant. Mr. Wicklein now undertook to supply these pulpits. His educational ability was recognized and he made himself many friends. He continued to serve as pastor, but his lack of pastoral tact soon made him many enemies also, who continued constantly to remind him that he had no right to occupy the pulpit of the church. After the confusion of 1871, he continued to preach at the "Streitkirche," east of New Ringgold, and also preached later at either Moselem or Alsace church in Berks county. He removed to reside at Port Clinton, Pa., where on December 11th, 1873, having gone on a day's hunting expedition, into the Blue mountain wilds, a falling tree struck him on the head and killed him instantly.

14. Rev. Daniel K. Kepner, A. M., was born at New Hanover, Pa., Oct. 13, 1836, graduated from Pennsylvania college at Gettysburg, Pa., in 1867, and from the Theological Seminary at Philadelphia in 1870. He was ordained to the office of the ministry in the

It is not profitable to enter at length into the confusion now arising. Some of the dissatisfied members of the congregation had in 1863 withdrawn and built a new church in the Summer Valley, about one and a half miles east of New Ringgold near the township line. But the first pastor they elected (a Pastor Adolph Schmidt), proved a vagabond, and their efforts were abandoned after a time. Rev. Kepner, however, clothed with the mantle of church usages, and an organizer of high qualifications soon succeeded to bring matters into some semblance of order and became the regular pastor, while Mr. Wicklein, defeated and chagrined, opened his batteries against the Synod from the "Schmidt" church which was reopened for him by a few partisans, and he continued there to hold forth until his death in 1873, when said church building was razed that it might "no more do harm to souls."

Having succeeded to again set matters right, even against many antagonisms of the most bitter nature, Rev. Kepner recognized that in the interest of harmony he should now leave the field, and let the good seed grow under the watering of another good man whose hands were free from the partisanships and animosities of the "confusion." He therefore accepted a call to Slatington, Pa.; but, not before he had caused the Rev. I. N. S. Erb,[15] then a student in the Theological Seminary at Philadelphia to be invited to accept the pastor-

same year by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. He married Lydia A. Brendlinger, of New Hanover, May 29, 1871, came to Orwigsburg; and left this charge in 1872 to serve the congregation at Slatington, Pa. In 1875 he was called to Pottstown, where he died, May, 189[illegible]. Rev. Kepner had served in the war of the Rebellion as regimental quartermaster, 179th P. V., Dec. 8th, 1862 to July 7, 1863; re-enlisted July 12, 1864; was lieutenant of Co. C, 195th Regiment, P. V.; later commissioned captain, and served until discharged, July 21, 1865.

15. Isaac Newton Steltz Erb, son of David and Julia (Steltz) Erb was born in Douglass Township, Montgomery county, Pa., near Gilbertsville, Feb. 27, 1844; received his preparatory training in the public schools near his native place and in Washington Hall Collegiate Institute, Trappe, Pa., where he spent two years, 1865-67. He taught school at various places; entered Muhlenberg college in 1867, at the beginning of the first session of that institution, and graduated with second honor in 1870. In the fall of the same year he entered the Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, and graduated in 1873. He was ordained by the Ministerium in the spring of 1873, and served the congregations of this parish eminently, and faithfully

ate of the charge upon his ordination. Thus, he left the charge in the late fall or early winter of 1872. Student Erb now took the reins and with great tact, added to great pastoral ability, led the congregation firmly and harmoniously into the path of renewed progress and loyalty to the Organization of the Lutheran church in America. He became the regular pastor of the parish, (1873) adding also Zion's in West Brunswick, and St. John's at Auburn, to the same; and served them well and to the glory of God until his hard labors sapped his physical strength, and took him from the church militant to the church triumphant in Heaven, June 1888.

Thus by the Grace of God closes the long chapter of turmoil and trial through which the congregation was made to pass by reason of improper advisers at the beginning, and perhaps also by reason of the Synod's lack of available clergy. Whatever the causes leading to it all may have been,[16] they were in the highest degree reprehensible before God and man; but happily the prayers of God's people do not rise in vain, and now, after a quarter century of regularity, growth, and devotion the congregation looks forward to the future with new courage.

The Lutheran Congregation now numbers up-

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until his death, June 3, 1888, at the age of 44 years, 3 months, 6 days. He wrote and contributed many articles of interest and value to the church periodicals; held offices of honor and trust in the church, and was alumni orator at his Alma Mater in 1875. He was married Nov. 9, 1874, to Ella M. Frailey of Orwigsburg, who, with one son (Dr. H. L. Erb,) and two daughters, survive him.

16. It is interesting to some one, perchance, to know that through all these years the more superstitious (?) believed that all these things came upon the congregation as a curse of God, because, as is told, in the cornerstone of the first church there was placed a copy of the articles of the congregation's original organization, which contained the following provision, inter alia:—"Cursed be he who ever alienates, or attempts to alienate these Lutheran Church and School lands, or attempts by gift or otherwise to deprive our beloved Lutheran church of one jot or tittle of its possession in and to the same, forevermore." We have, however, not been able to find even a fragment of these "original articles;" but it is likely that such a provision, as is told of, was made, since we find a similar imprecation written in the paper saved from the corner stone of the first church at Zion's in West Brunswick Township, (1770). Now, in view of the Lutherans having granted the Reformed people a right in these lands, these alarmists are convinced that God is only answering the petition of the old fathers, when he permits these confusions.

wards of 180 souls, while the Reformed congregation, served all these years continuously with only two changes of pastors[17] has grown to a flock of nearly the same number.

17. For biographical notes on Reformed pastors, Meyer, and Zulick, see Notes to Chapter VII.

CHAPTER XII.

THE LAST QUARTER CENTURY.—THE THIRD CHURCH EDIFICE.

NEW hopes ferment new energies. With the coming of Rev. I. N. S. Erb, all party spirit was again allayed. Wisely did Rev. Erb take up his residence in the midst of this people for the first year, before he removed to reside in Orwigsburg, which was more central in the parish.[1] His daily contact with the people, and his tact, allayed all former contentions, and laid the foundations of a united spirit which had not been felt among these people during the trials of the church in the preceding years.* Though the congregation had existed in some form or other for upwards of a century and a quarter, they had never known the "luxury" of a pastor immediately resident among them. Therefore, when, just twenty-five years ago, the pastorate of Rev. Erb[2] began, there began a new life for the congregation also.

Not only did disturbing factionalism or partyism cease, but churchly order also began to arise out of the semi-political chaos which had marked the contentions of the Wicklein confusion. The church building itself had grown old and dilapidated, and one of the first agitations of this period was as to the building of a new church edifice. The only discordant note that threatened to interject itself into the song of harmony, was the proposition to remove the location of the church to New Ringgold. Desirable as this would have been for

1. The Orwigsburg Parish, comprising the five congregations heretofore named, lies in the form of a triangle, the longest side of which is the base,—being the Blue mountains on the east—from Auburn, Pa., to a point about 4 miles northeast of New Ringgold, Pa., (about 16 miles), and Orwigsburg at the apex, with Friedens church six miles distant to the northeastward, and St. John's church of Auburn 6 miles distant to the southeastward.

2. For Biographical sketch of Rev. Erb, see Note 15, Chapter XI.

many good reasons, Rev. Erb knew how to not only yield his own personal preferences for the sake of peace, but also to lead the advocates of the removal proposition to yield gracefully and support the project of the new church on the old site with the ardor of love. Rev. Father Zulick of the Reformed congregation having become very feeble physically, by reason of age, could no longer take much part in moulding the progress of the Union Church, but, such influence as he could yet exert he used to further the peace projects initiated by Rev. Erb, and thus both Lutherans and Reformed looked up to Rev. Erb to lead the new church project into progressive channels.

When, late in 1874, it was finally decided to procede with the building of the new Union Friedens Church,—Rev. Erb, although he had already removed his residence to Orwigsburg, Pa., for some time, was chosen chairman of the joint building committee, which, beside himself, was constituted with George Teter, Daniel Nester, Jr., and Jacob S. Godshall, as Lutheran members, and George Washington Dreibelbies, Israel Stamm, and Henry Reinhard, as Reformed members.

The building of a new church edifice is not usually a means of cementing congregations, but, here was an exception; and this building committee was an instrument, by God's grace, of obliterating the bitter memories of the past, in the dawning of the brighter light of the future for the congregations. Pastor Zulick passed away, and the Rev. Henry Leisse was called. Pastor Leisse also joined harmoniously in the purposes of the people for a betterment of congregational conditions, and in the early days of 1875, the contract to build the new edifice was given to Paul Bock, Esq. The congregation themselves raised the basement walls, and, on May 30, 1875, the corner stone of the third Friedens Church was laid with appropriate services, at which the pastors loci, were efficiently assisted by Rev. A. R. Horne, D.D., of the Lutheran church, and Rev. F. W. Kramer, D.D., of the Reformed church.

The contractor now pushed the work, under the efficient superintendency of the Building Committee; and on the morning of October 10, 1875, the crisp autumn air, for the first time in the Little Schuylkill Valley,[3] bore the vibrating peals of the first church bell at Friedens to happy ears, calling the congregations to gather devoutly and thankfully in the church edifice now completed, at a cost of about six thousand dollars; and there, they consecrated that monument of their love and loyalty unto the service of the Triune God—a pledge of new congregational life, and renewed devotion to the glory of Christ's Kingdom on earth.

To the furtherance of these greater and fraternal aspirations the congregations also proceeded to revise their organic law, or constitution. Reverends Erb and Leisse, at the desire of the congregations, jointly submitted to the congregations at a meeting for that purpose regularly called, a revised church Constitution and By-Laws, based strictly upon the recommendations of the Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania, and those of the Reformed Church in the United States, adapting the minor matters of property regulations, etc., to the needs of a Union Church. This revised organic law was thereupon unanimously adopted; and upon this churchly basis the new generation, just now coming in to take up the reins of churchly progress, will, by the grace of God, build every stone upon the one only foundation stone which is laid eternally in the heavens,—Jesus Christ the Savior.

Reverends Erb and Leisse both recognized how much need there was for bringing the blessings of

3. There had been no bell on the former church edifices, and in the original contract for building the present edifice no provision had been made for a bell or tower; but during the progress of the building operations, provision was made with the contractor to add also a tower and bell. There was no special mechanism for tolling the bell when members died; but the sexton or janitor would, whenever a death occurred in the congregation, climb up into the belfry and, with a common hammer, strike the bell to toll out the number of strokes corresponding to the number of years in the age of the deceased. It was on the occasion of the funeral of Mrs. Sussana Boyer, June 10th, 1876, that sexton Gerhard, in tolling the bell thus, struck it with a hammer blow which cracked the bell; and this "lesser edition of the Liberty Bell" was relegated to the loft of the church, when a new bell was procured to replace it.

the Church of Jesus to those whose circumstances and infirmities prevented them from coming regularly to the altars in the church, from great distances; and, as some of the members had four miles and over to come to the church, they commenced to hold occasional preaching services at Public School Houses in the district, where also affiliated Sunday Schools were organized.[4] But, by reason of their large charges both pastors felt how impossible it would be to continue this work profitably; yet, aware how these independent Sunday Schools, could, in the hands of selfish persons, with petty personal ambitions, become instruments to wean the young away from the church, they were compelled to continue what both saw was a mistake,[5] and what began to show its consequences ere many years. Children raised in these Sunday Schools, would indeed, for want of better opportunity, attend the catechetical lectures in the church and be confirmed; but later, they felt estranged in the church and would lay their stress upon the local Sunday School alone, to the great detriment of their church activity and church love. This has largely accounted for the lack of young men, ready to take up the leadership in the activities of the congregation, though as worshipers their attendance is numerous.

The joint pastorate of Reverends Erb and Leisse

4. This was especially the case at Bachert's School House, about two miles east of New Ringgold, and Kleckner's School House in the Kleckner Valley, about one and a-half miles east of Hecla, Pa. Another Sunday school was started at Weaver's School House. In the two former, Rev. Leisse has continued the preaching services since the division of the Reformed parish in 1888, leaving him only three regular congregations in Bethany charge. Rev. Weller has found it impossible to continue this work of his predecessor, because it would militate against his labors for the efficient progress of the congregation at Friedens church.

5. Becoming but too evident now.

*In 1753 May 9, Benjamin Franklin, in a letter to Peter Collison, in favor of English schools for the German, wrote: "We can not address them from either press or pulpit, so that it is almost impossible to remove any prejudices they may entertain. Their clergy have very little influence on the people, who seem to take pleasure in abusing and discharging the minister on every trivial occasion. * * * * Not being used to liberty they know not how to make modest use of it. (See Spark's Works of Franklin. VII. pp. 71-73.) Dr. Benjamin Rush (1798) in his "Manners of the German Inhabitants of Pennsylvania," says of this: "Otherwise an astute statesman, and a philosopher, Franklin, with his Yankee prejudices, was drawn into the net of the wise-acres of the times."—p. 63.

continued to be blessed with peace and progress, and though in 1888, Rev. Erb was called to his eternal reward, in the zenith of his activities, to be succeeded by Rev. Weller, in 1889, the sunshine of that happy dawn, a quarter of a century since, has not diminished but rather increased in brightness continually as it dispelled the mists of the past beyond the horizon of blessed oblivion.

HENRY LEISSE.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PRESENT.—PASTORS.

THE vexing problems of the years bing solved, the past secure, turn we now to the present; no longer a huddle of petty individualisms held together by a rope of sand; no longer led as in early years by mercenary independents, whose interests in the American dollar overbalanced every other instinct; no longer a body worshiping the "man in the pulpit" more than his Master as whose ambassador he comes; no longer a provincial troop without affiliation, or churchly order, or a responsible leader; but a congregation indeed, a part and parcel of the greater body that comprises the church of the Living God; a power for good and noble action in the community, which dares to face the problems which the future, under God's grace, may bring, with hearts consecrate to the advancement of Christ's kingdom among men and the eternal salvation of many souls.

Ashamed, now, of nothing that God has sent, and ready for everything that God in His wisdom and mercy may send; the sword of the Eternal Word of Life, and the shield of the vicarious cross of Calvary are the weapons, offensive and defensive, with which they greet the future.

To the Reformed flock, at the close of the long years of consecrated service of the Reverend John Zulick, came

REV. HENRY LEISSE.

Rev. Leisse was born in Heidelberg, Berks Co., Penna,. August 16, 1844. In addition to the instruction which he received in the public schools of his home, he attended the "select" school at Womels-

dorf, Pa., and the boarding school, then known as Freeland Seminary, at Freeland, Montgomery County, Pa. He taught in the public schools for several terms. In obedience to a higher call to the gospel ministry, he entered Palatinate College, at Myerstown, Pa. In the fall of 1869, he entered Ursinus College, and completed the course of Theology there taught, in the spring of 1872. He was at this season licensed to preach the gospel, by the Philadelphia Classis of the Reformed Church which met in annual session at North Wales, Montgomery County, Pa. Shortly after this he received a call from the Orwigsburg charge, then comprising the Orwigsburg, Zion's, Auburn and McKeansburg congregations. This call he accepted, and was ordained to the gospel ministry in open meeting of Lebanon Classis which then met in annual session at Hamburg, Berks County, Pa. On the first Sabbath in June 1872, he entered upon the duties of his call to this charge.

In the early spring of 1875, after the death of Rev. John Zulick, he was elected pastor of Friedens Reformed congregation at the Little Schuylkill. This congregation, virtually within the territory of the Lebanon Classis, was thus united with the Orwigsburg charge. In addition to this charge Rev. Leisse supplied the pulpit of the Reformed congregation at Lewistown for a number of years also. For various reasons the latter congregation was, however, united with another charge, and his labors were again limited to the constituted charge to which he had been called.

In the year 1888, measures were taken which resulted in the division of this charge. The congregations at Orwigsburg and McKeansburg were then declared a charge by themselves. Pastor Leisse resigned this part of the original field, while the three remaining congregations,—Zion's, Auburn, and Friedens, continue to be served by him to this day, under the name of "Bethany Charge."

From the above it may be inferred that this pastor has gone in and out among the same people for upwards of a quarter century.

While the foregoing more generally intimates this pastor's relation to the charge, it may herein be proper to have at least a few statements more definitely intimating the relation and experience of the pastor and the congregation, which in its centennial existence has called for a little pastoral relation of experience.

During his pastorate, Rev. Leisse has added upwards of two hundred members by confirmation. Making due allowance for removals by death and otherwise, the congregation has grown numerically and he humbly trusts, spiritually also. For all this, pastor and people ascribe praise to the great Head of the Church from whom all blessings do flow. Again, pastor and congregation do not forget that others had laid the foundation and builded thereon, and how they were permitted to enter into such labor. Once again, pastor and people would also remember that they have been permitted to worship at the same altar with the Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of our much beloved Friedens Church; and, thus, in union with their Common Head, and in communion with one another, they have realized the good favor of Christ and His Church. Now, unto him that was, and is, and is to come, be all the praise.

After the efficient labors of Rev. I. N. S. Erb, in this congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church to the day when he was called to his eternal reward, the mantle of the pastorate fell upon the present pastor

REV. HARVEY A. WELLER.

Rev. H. A. Weller, eldest son of Dr. Joseph, and Sarah (Kern) Weller, was born under the paternal roof at Trexlertown, Lehigh County, Penna., July 8, 1859, and baptized in August of the same year.

Besides the public school training of his native town and the catechetical instruction preparatory to church membership—under Rev. B. E. Kramlich, he received his preparatory education at Pennington Seminary, N. J., (1872-73,) and Ursinus college, at Collegeville, Montgomery County, Pa., (1875-76.) At the age of 15 he began teaching in the public schools of his native town, and taught there successfully for several terms (1873-75). His vacations were spent working on the farm, and in the limestone quarries, as later also with the carpenters, to earn what he could to help him through his school expenses. He entered Muhlenberg college at Allentown, as a member of the Freshman class in the fall of 1877, but left the college at the end of Sophomore year in order to take up the study of law, preparatory to his admission to the bar. His own predelictions were toward the gospel ministry, and his previous school efforts had been inspired with the hope of their attainment. But Providence seemed to have purposed another lesson in the school of experience with human nature, and the low condition of his financial resources, coupled with the wish of his parent that he should enter the legal profession rather than the pulpit, determined him to alter his plans for the time. Accordingly he was registered as a student-at-law, and took up his studies in that course in the fall of the year 1879, at the law office of the Hon. Evan Holben, at Allentown, Pa.

His law preceptor was a very thorough instructor, and withal a kind man, who gave his students many "opportunities to earn a dollar" while perusing the prescribed course of instruction. Thus, with such financial aid as the parent, who had other boys and girls to educate also, could afford, he finished his course at law, and was admitted to practice as an Attorney and Counselor at Law, in the Courts of Lehigh County—at the March term of Court 1882. He was afterwards admitted to prac-

N. A. Weller.

tice at the bar of the Courts at Easton, Pa., (June Term 1885) and at the bar of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

His clientage accumulated, and, with his practice he ever felt that he was called to a higher mission, and that this good fortune, in his legal career, was but the Divine means of furthering that call. His aversion to "the tricks of trade," and, indeed, to the whole practice of his profession grew constantly stronger, and so in the fall of 1886 he closed his law office, to remove to the quiet and beautiful Dryland church district, at the village of Hecktown, Northampton County, Pa., where he opened a private academy for the preparation of young men for teaching, or for college; There with the consent of the President of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, Dr. G. F. Krotel, of New York,—he took up the course in Lutheran Theology, at first under the efficient tutorship of the late Rev. Enoch Smith, at Bethlehem, Pa. With his school and the office of Justice of the Peace to which the people of Lower Nazareth township elected him, he husbanded his store of financial provision, and entered the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary at Franklin Square, Philadelphia, (now removed to Mt. Airy), as a member of the Senior class, in the fall of the year 1888; whence he graduated in the spring of 1889, and was examined and ordained to the ministry by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and adjacent states at its session at Lebanon, Pa., June 17, 1889.

Early in March, 1889, before his course at the Seminary was completed, he received a call to the pastorate of the Orwigsburg parish, (including Friedens Church, Christ Church at McKeansburg, St. John's at Auburn, Zion's in West Brunswick, and St. Paul's at Orwigsburg.) Another call to the western part of Pennsylvania came to him at about the same time. But, laying the case before his spiritual father, the late Rev. Prof. J. W. Mann, D.D., of the Seminary faculty, he decided to accept the call from Orwigsburg parish, conditioned upon

his ordination by the Ministerium. In the meantime, the congregations of the parish having represented to the Faculty of the Seminary that before the election of H. A. Weller, they had heard 21 other pastors and candidates, and desired now, in the interests of peace and good order, to be served by the man of their unanimous choice, the Faculty permitted Mr. Weller to serve them regularly with preaching until his ordination. Thus he served them from Philadelphia, every Sunday until he took up his residence with his family in Orwigsburg, immediately after his ordination; and though tempting calls to other congregations have come to him since, he has served the parish since that day.

In his almost ten years of pastoral service, he has, besides his work in the four other congregations of the parish, baptized 166 infants and 14 adult persons in this congregation, officiated at 41 weddings, held funeral services over the remains of 57 of our dead, besides assisting at the services of the burial of 24 others. He has instructed and received into membership with the congregation by confirmation, 109 young people, and admitted 10 by certificate from other congregations; preached 272 regular Sunday and Festival sermons, and 56 special sermons and addresses, besides funeral sermons, at this church; to visit the aged and the sick, and to make other pastoral calls in the congregation, as well as to meet his regular appointments at the church, he has traveled, in season and out of season, over 3,200 miles on buggy or sleigh.

With all the busy life as pastor of a large and widely extended parish his midnight lamp has seen his pen busy to contribute articles of interest and value to the press, and periodicals. From 1893 to 1896 he combined the duties of the presidency of the Pottsville Conference of the Ministerium, with his parish duties, and takes great interest in the advancement of every educational advantage for young and old. He was married to Ada J. Desch, of Trexlertown, Pa., and their love has been blessed of God. Three daughters help the mother to light

the pastor's home, to which he often returns tried and weary, to find renewed courage for further trials, in the smile and the comforting word of the home.

Thankful for God's abundant mercies in the past, pastor and people unite at heaven's throne to pray for that grace, which shall make all enlist every energy of mind and soul to carry into the opening century of the church, new powers, new gifts, and new congregational life, unto the glory of Christ's kingdom among men, and the eternal praise of God in heaven.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

"AUS dem Haus in die Schule; aus der Schule, in die Kirche; und aus der Kirche in den Himmel" was the adage which marked the life of the fathers. Recognizing that the public schools, began more and more to be secularized, and to depart from teaching even the commonest rules of morality, in many cases; the first attempt at supplementing the spiritual education of the home by gathering the children into Sunday School at the church was made by the congregation of Friedens Church in 1870, under the leadership of Valentine Hessinger and John Felker. The services of the church being all conducted in the German language and the school education of the children being all in English, it was felt that the Sunday School should step in to teach the children in German also.

For some reason the idea of teaching German, to the exclusion of the Catechisms, and Biblical lessons, militated against the progress of the school, and the attempt failed about a year after its institution. In the year, 1876, however, under the instigation of the pastors, Mr. John L. Eckert, than whom in his lifetime the young people in the church have had no more earnestly interested friend among the laity of the congregation, undertook to organize an English Sunday School at the church. Mr. Eckert became its first Superintendent, and Mr. Francis Moyer, the present devoted Superintendent of the school became the secretary. This school opened with eighty pupils enrolled, which increased to one hundred and eighty in 1877. The progress of the young people under such influences was very marked; but, as in the olden days the Church itself

suffered for want of the united support of the members, so also the Sunday school has felt the blighting of the want of cordial interest on the part of many of the church members, at times in its career. None opposed it; but, few were ready to sacrifice time to fill its ranks of teachers and officers.

At a special meeting held December 29, 1879, an election for officers was held, and David Vetter, Esq., a competent and energetic teacher, devoted to the advancement of the church's interests, consented to undertake the superintendency to succeed Mr. Eckert. Things now went onward until the election of officers on Christmas day, 1880, when, on account of some disagreement, the election was postponed, and the school remained without active officers until Rev. Erb called a meeting for January 20, 1881, where Mr. Eckert was elected to the superintendency, Dr. B. F. Saladay assistant, and Francis Moyer, secretary. In December of the same year Dr. B. F. Saladay, a beloved and efficient practicing physician at New Ringgold, whose daily contact with the people among a wide clientage of families in the community opened to him especial opportunities for efficient church and Sunday school work, succeeded to the superintendency, with Wm. H. Miller, a merchant of New Ringgold, (since deceased) as assistant, and Francis Moyer as secretary.

The school was now in a flourishing condition; and on December 28, 1882, Henry Dreibelbies, now the Trustee of the Reformed congregation, and President of the joint church council, was elected to the superintendency of the school, with Frank H. Eckert, (since deceased) as assistant, and Charles S. Stamm, secretary. For some reason Mr. Dreibelbies could not accept the position, and the assistant superintendent carried on the work with marked success. In 1883, Oscar Witman, succeeded to the superintendency, with J. L. Eckert, assistant and F. H. Eckert secretary; but on account of removal of his residence, Mr. Witman could serve a few Sundays only, when the task again fell to

J. L. Eckert, and, when the next annual election come, he was unanimously promoted again to the superintendency, with Daniel Witman assistant. Until 1888, these officers continued in uninterrupted service, and then again David Vetter, Esq., took up the reins, to guide the work until December 28, 1891, when John L. Eckert in turn succeeded him, and held the office faithfully and uninterruptedly until his death, January 11, 1898.

The death of Mr. Eckert was a blow to the Sunday school; and soon thereafter Rev. Weller called a joint meeting of the congregations and the Sunday school when the present efficient and painstaking officers were elected, because Mr. Geo. W. Freeman the active young assistant superintendent under Mr. Eckert had to relinquish his labors in the school on account of obtaining daily employment in another community.

One of the errors committed in the organization of the Sunday school in 1876, was to have its organization distinct from that of the congregations, this has at times served to militate against the efficient activities, and cordial support of some of the members of the church to the Sunday school work.

The necessity for more energetic activity of the older men and women of the congregation in the school, and the reciprocal cordiality of the organic support of the school to the congregation at all times is now being fully recognized, and when the realization of these things comes in the near future the prosperity of both will be more nearly realized. To Francis Moyer, Esq., the first secretary of the Sunday school, and now its energetic superintendent, with his able corps of assistants under his supervision, has fallen the task of reconstruction, and the "Squire's" well-known capacity as an organizer bids fair to bring the school to a high standard of excellence, to which he deserves the most cordial enlistment of the cooperation of every church member.

The regular church lesson leaves and helps for

the Sunday school have been used for some years, and altogether the prospects for the future of the school are very encouraging

We append to this chapter, the following catalogue of the present efficient corps of Sunday school workers, at the church, many of whom have been active in this noble work for years; and many more, who are able members of the church, should find their names in this catalogue.

Superintendent.—Francis Moyer, Esq.

Assistant Supt.—Geo. W. Stamm. Librarian.—Ellis S. Marshall.

Se'cy.—F. W. Moyer. Treas.—Fred Moritz. Usher.—Frank Nester.

Organist.—Alice M. Becker. Asst. Organist.—Mamie Matz.

Supt. of Infant School.—Mrs. Dr. Geo. S. Marberger.

Teachers.	Teachers.
Chas. S. Bensinger,	Kate Will,
Francis Moyer,	Sallie Yost,
Fred Moritz,	Ellen Rumbel,
Alice M. Becker,	Sallie Nester,
Mrs. E. S. Marshall,	Sallie Leiser.
Clara C. Bock,	

Number of regular pupils enrolled, 125.

For some years already, the officers and teachers of the school have held regular teachers' meetings on weekday evenings; and this has proved a source of pleasure to the teacher and much profit to the school.

CHAPTER XV.

THE YOUNG PEOPLES' SOCIETY.

A need for gathering the young people of the congregations to enlist their individual energies in organized labors for the church made itself felt here also. Therefore, in December, 1889, at the call of Rev. Weller, many of the young people gathered to organize an Aid Society, whose primary objects should be to assist the pastors in promoting the Christian life of the community and to disseminate church literature, and missionary tidings, as well as to undertake the systematic study of the history and development of the church at large.

Rev. Weller was elected President, Clara C. Bock Secretary, and Mrs. Daniel Leiser, Treasurer; the work for the Society was mapped out, and at first, monthly meetings were provided for. By reason of his distant residence, Rev. Weller could not always be present; and since every Sunday brought him three regular appointments to preach, he could not be present on Sunday evenings, therefore the meetings of the Society were at first frequently held after the regular church services on the Lord's day. This led to the introduction of English evening services in the church,—of which we shall speak in the chapter on the language question.

Under all these drawbacks the Society made rapid progress, and Mr. John L. Eckert was persuaded to take up the leadership of the Society in 1890. Mr. Eckert consented to this upon the proposition of Rev. Weller that he would prepare, and weekly furnish a programme of exercises and lessons for the use of the Society.[1] This gave rise to the weekly

1. "The Evening Hour of Praise and Prayer" was a four page weekly programme of devotional exercises for the allied societies of the Luther League. It was prepared weekly; written on a cyclostyle copy-press, and printed therefrom. It was so well received by many societies in the churches of Schuylkill county that its

publication of "The Evening Hour of Praise and Prayer," which Rev. W., furnished regularly to all the young peoples' societies of the parish from January 1, 1891, to April 1, 1898, thus keeping in perfect touch with the work of the Society though compelled to be personally absent at their meetings.

The meetings of the Society were thenceforward held weekly on the evening of the Lord's day at the church. The ladies of the Society also formed themselves into a sewing-circle and did much good work, though about 1894, this part of the society work began to lag. In 1893 Mr. Eckert organized also a very active junior department of the Society, and Rev. W., issued a weekly programme for this assembly of the little folks also.[2]

The first great undertaking of the Young People's Society was initiated in 1890, when, in view of the bare white walls in the church, (no longer white but streaked indeed) they proposed to gather funds for renovating and improving the interior of the church. Now came a season of most energetic activity; committees were gathering funds, others were making quilts, aprons, etc., while all moved onward to the beautifying of the interior of the church and basement.[3]

What joint effort can accomplish was soon shown when, with the permission of the church council

weekly issue attained over 500 copies and entailed great labor on the pastor. It followed the course of topics published by the Y. P. S. C. E., at Boston; and was adapted to the needs of our churches, containing, besides appropriate Liturgical exercises following the order of the church year, queries on the topic, responsive Bible readings, &c.: providing also daily readings and studies in the Bible for the week, preparatory to the topic for the Sunday evening meetings.

2. Similar to the exercises prepared for the senior societies, but adapted especially for children; these programmes were prepared in the same way, and were the instrument of forming many Junior Societies in the county. Their weekly issue, besides the "Evening Hour" had attained to over 200 copies when Rev. Weller was obliged to discontinue their publication in 1898, because of his accumulating pastoral labors in the parish.

3. The interior of the church was very much beautified. Though some of the old people had advocated the whitewashing of the walls, the younger people pushed on; and, as a result, the walls were beautifully papered, in imitation of church-fresco work; the woodwork was painted and varnished, new carpets procured and put down, a large mural painting representing the good shepherd, put in the altar recess, and the interior generally renovated, at a great expense, and when all was done and paid for, there remained a slight balance of cash on hand, which was handed over to the treasurer of the church. The entire community joined in paying the expense.

the work was begun; and in the late summer of 1891, the beautiful church auditorium, chancel, and basement were reopened with appropriate services; the pastors loci being assisted by Rev. J. Gruhler, President of the Third District conference of Lutheran church, and Rev. A. R. Bartholomew of the Reformed church. The evening services were conducted by the Society under the leadership of the pastors, and will long be remembered by all, for their spirit of earnest devotion, and the character of the musical programme rendered, as well as the papers on the devotional topic of the evening that were read by various members.

The Society has since then done much good work for the spiritual upbuilding of the young people of the congregation; the results of which, though not so prominent to the eye, have marked a distinct chapter in the history of the progress of the congregations in the last decade, unto the glory of God.

Two things have within this year come to pass in the history of the society which have cast a shadow of desire upon the members. The first was the death of their efficient leader, John L. Eckert, in January, and the consequent discontinuance of the Junior Society work,—and the second, though less, was the fact that on account of the accumulating work in the pastorate of the parish, the lessons published so long by Rev. Weller had to be discontinued. The latter of these losses was remedied by adopting the Society quarterlies published in the interest of the Y. P. S. C. E. at Akron, Ohio,—but the former has left a void, which though others fill the position ably and energetically, yet brings regrets for the personality of the departed leader. Mr. Israel C. Yost, a young man of exceptional qualifications, assisted by C. S. Marberger of New Ringgold, have been chosen as the leaders of the work, and its prospects are again brightening, though at present, on account of Mr. Yost's absence as a student at the Keystone State Normal School, the entire labor of the leadership has devolved upon Mr. Marburger, with such assistance as Rev. Leisse,

who has an evening free to this work every second Sunday, can give in the premises.

The Society has been regularly represented by delegates at the annual conventions of the Central Luther League of Schuylkill County, and has thus kept in efficient touch with the great work of the church at large.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LANGUAGE QUESTION IN LATTER YEARS.

IN eastern, especially south-eastern Pennsylvania, these years of the closing nineteenth century see many centennials and sesqui-centennial anniversary celebrations of congregations of the church, and it has been a matter inviting comment, that, for sermons at some of these some pastors have been pleased to choose as text the words of Holy Writ recorded, Rev. Chap. 3-11: "Hold that fast which Thou hast, that thy crown be not taken from Thee, and in the discourse lay stress upon the retention of the German language in the services of the church. This battle for the retention of a particular language may be pardonable in congregations where the increase is generally from an influx of later German immigrants; but, though his forefathers were German, and he is proud of his good old German lineage with its deep piety, and unwavering moral influences, the descendant of these fathers today in the interior counties of the state is a Pennsylvania German, recognizing that Pennsylvania is a part of the great American nation of which he is equally proud, and to which his blood has pledged his loyalty;—while in his home he addresses his children in the English language,—not that of Britain, but the English of America, and he sends them to be educated in the English speaking universities, colleges, and schools of his own land.

His church itself in its greater educational institutions teaches the language of America, and addresses her students in that tongue. The pupils of the public school, which he supports with the same ardor of love and interest as his parent supported the German church-school, recite their lessons in

the English vernacular. German, where taught in the schools, is taught now as French, or Spanish, or any other living, but foreign, language is taught; And though his church services have continued to be conducted in the mother tongue of his forebears, for many years, the language transition period is upon him even there, and reluctantly as he may yield his personal preference, he loves his church too well to permit her growth to be jeopardized by an inordinate interest in the German tongue.

This is peculiarly true also of the community of Friedens Church. As every community has its progressive people, so also it has its conservative element to keep a break upon too rapid and thoughtless action. Their innate love for the soulful, and rythmic language of the fatherland has not made them ready to lay it off for the more matter-of-fact and less expressionable language of America, as a man lays off his workday coat to don his Sunday clothes, and it may be well understood that their first efforts in the home, and Sunday school, after the church-school gave way to the public school system, were directed toward the training of the children to the use of the mother tongue in the services of public worship. The spirit of Americanism, however, planted by the struggles of our common country, and watered with the blood of our own immediate fathers and brothers, together with the tears of many a mother widowed by the issues of war for Liberty, her maintenance and dissemination, made itself prominent over the sentiment of simple ancestor worship, and gradually there were less and less numbers among the audience on the right hand galleries of the church, (the seats for young men and boys), who could take up the German hymnbook or the German liturgy to understandingly join in the service, or to appreciate the power of the word spoken to them in the German sermon ("Erbarmlich Deutsch" as such sermons often became because of the attempt of the pastor to be perfectly intelligible to his younger, Americanized hearers also).

Pennsylvania German young men, educated to preach in both English and German languages, began to supplant the immigrant German pastor in their pulpits. Thus, in sympathy with their traditions, and awake to their needs, these younger leaders led the church of the Pennsylvania German safely and tactfully into the channels of transition.

Every transition period, whether in church life, or whatever, is a period of danger.

As early as 1870, the attempt to maintain an entirely German Sunday school failed at Friedens Church. The establishment of a mixed German and English Sunday school was more successful, though in it the general liturgical exercises of opening and closing the school, and the hymns sung by the school had from the beginning to be conducted in the English tongue. This gave countenance to the establishment of German Sunday schools in public school houses of the outlying district,—which schools soon also changed from the German to the English language.

During the pastorate of Rev. Erb and Rev. Leisse it was felt that unless at least some services were conducted in the church in the English tongue, the young people, who were beginning to be attracted to the English services of the sects round about, would be lost to the church. Therefore it was decided to have four sermons by each pastor annually in the church. Soon, however, it was felt that these services were not sufficiently numerous. With the advent of the Young Peoples' Society, whose services were conducted in the English language too, came the recognition of a need for more frequent English services. The pastors were therefore requested to hold more English services, and for a time the people had an English service every third Sunday.

The increased attendance and earnestness shown by even the parents in these English services, brought about a better feeling toward the English language in the church, and, then came the Church Book in English. At the time of the improvement

of the interior of the Church edifice, a German friend from New York City presented an English pulpit Bible to the congregation. The use of the English church book at the English services increased; young men came forward to accept the duties of the deacon's office in the congregation; new life infused itself even into the German services, and at this time the services by the Lutheran pastor at least, are conducted alternately in the English and German languages every second week. The Reformed pastor also holds more frequent English services.

Thus is the transition progressing to the good estate of the future growth of the congregation. Few indeed, even among the older people, are they who have not found the English language of the sermon more intelligible to them, and, though we hesitate to think of a day when the beloved German hymns of the forefathers will cease to echo from these walls, yet, it needs not prophetic vision to foretell that a service conducted here in the German language, will within another generation, sound as strange and foreign to the congregation, as did the first English services to the fathers, in the early 70's of this century, and no man of good gifts and talents will have the temerity to assert that the results of this transition will rob the congregation of its "crown" of deep faith and piety, or besmirch its escutcheon—the cross of Jesus, because the matter of particular language shall have robbed the Word of Life, preached and believed here, of a jot or tittle of its glory and power.

CHAPTER XVII.

PRESENT ORGANIZATIONS.—CENTENARY.

THE present organization of the Lutheran and the Reformed congregations, worshiping in this church in united sympathies for so many years past, comprises the following church officers:

LUTHERAN.	REFORMED.
H. A. WELLER, Pastor.	HENRY LEISSE, Pastor.
GEORGE TETER, DANIEL NESTER, Elders.	HENRY REINHARDT, FRANCIS MOYER, Elders.
WALLACE A. KLECKNER, CYRUS O. ECKERT, AARON TETER, J. CLAUDE BOLICH, Deacons.	DEVILLA MATZ, DANIEL LONG, GEORGE STAMM, WILLIAM SASSAMAN, Deacons.
JOHN KUNKEL, Trustee.	HENRY DREIBELBIES, Trustee.

Acting President of Joint Church Council.—JOHN KUNKEL.

Sec'y.—FRANCIS MOYER. Treas.—HENRY REED.

During the month of June of the present year (1898) a movement was inaugurated to celebrate the centenary of the dedication of the first regular church edifice on the Sunday next preceding the 19th day of October. For the proper arrangement of matters to contribute to the success of the occasion, various meetings were called from time to time. Pastor Weller was authorized to prepare and cause to be printed a history of the congregation's growth. Committees were appointed to attend to the various details of the work. The pastors joined heartily with the people in furthering the project to a happy issue, by the grace of God. The ladies of the congregation recognizing that to the churchly decorations completed in 1891 there should now be added full sets of regular church altar cloths, to take the place of the one red altar-hanging which had been furnished as a memorial by the Lutheran

catechetical class of 1892 on the occasion of their confirmation, and had served as the only altar hanging in the church. Soon nimble fingers were busy in the work of love, embroidering full sets of cloths and pulpit and desk hangings in the colors appointed by the church for the seasons and festivals of the church year, (white, violet, red and green). And now after much devoted labor the beautiful product of their needlework will begin on this happy day (Oct. 15) to decorate the altar and pulpit of the church—that in the days to come, as the seasons come and go there may always remain this beautiful memorial of the centenary services of the church and the emblems and lessons that have been worked so patiently on these cloths may ever speak their world of meaning to those who shall come in the future to bring their sacrifices of praise and prayer to God before this altar, and hear to their soul's salvation the old, old story of redeeming grace preached from this pulpit, when the fingers that were now so busy to work them are dead, and the lips that now preach the gospel from the pulpit to us, shall be silent on earth forevermore. The committee on decorations for the occasion has not been idle. All have labored together in love and harmony to make this centenary a real milestone marking the progress of the congregation in growth, and in devotion; and, that those of the future, who may not be privileged to be present now, but who shall take our places when we are gone, and carry on the sweet work of God in Christ at this venerable spot, may know how we remember the grace of God which He wrought by our fathers, we append here a copy of the invitations sent out by the committee for that purpose, which invitation contains also the general programme of the centenary services:—

1798.—1898. The Congregation of Frieden's, "Little Schuylkill" Church desire your presence at the Centennial Anniversary of the dedication of their first church, New Ringgold, Schuylkill County, Pa., Saturday and Sunday, October 15th and 16th, 1898.

After the congregation of Frieden's Church by the Little Schuylkill had, for nearly half a century worshiped together, often without a pastor, in the little old log school house, (1754-1798), on the site where the church now stands they, by the favor of God, erect-

ed a log church edifice there, and dedicated the same, in the name of Frieden's Church, to the service of the Triune God, October 19, 1798.

Many have been her sons and daughters that have since gone out into the battle of life from her spiritual bosom.

That all these yet living, and all the descendants of these fathers and mothers who in their day worshipped here, may, with their friends, gather once again in the lap of this old mother church, it has been arranged to hold a series of special praise and thanksgiving services at the church, in commemoration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of that dedication, on Saturday and Sunday, October 15th and 16th, 1898.

The doors in the homes of the families and friends of the congregation stand open to welcome and entertain all visitors who will come. Write to a member of the committee if you come and have no relatives or acquaintances resident here with whom you can be entertained. State what time you expect to be here.

Respectfully desiring that you may arrange to be present at this happy reunion, we have the honor to remain, Cordially yours,

John Kunkel, Katie O. Bolich, Sallie E. Yost, Committee,

New Ringgold, Oct. 1st, 1898.

PROGRAMME OF SERVICES.

Saturday, October 15th, 1898, 2 o'clock P. M. Principal Historical Anniversary Services. Sermon by Rev. F. J. F. Schantz, D. D., of Meyerstown, Pa.

7 o'clock P. M. Services with Sunday School. Class Exercises. Addresses by the Pastors. Musical programme by the Sunday School and Congregation.

Sunday, October 16th, 1898, 10 o'clock A. M. Regular Liturgical and Preaching services. Sermon by Rev. T. N. Reber, of Andreas, Pa.

2 o'clock P. M. Choral Service by the Congregation. In this service it will be attempted to conduct the service of Scripture Lessons and Hymns as our fathers worshiped here in the time when there was no regular pastor, and the school-master led the services.

7 o'clock P. M. Special Praise Services, under the auspices of the Young Peoples' Society.

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Weller W45
Friedens church

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Frieden's church.
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